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University of California
Berkeley, California

Women in Politics Oral History Project

Elizabeth Rudel Gatov

GRASSROOTS PARTY ORGANIZER TO TREASURER OF THE UNITED STATES

With an Introduction by
Eugene C. Lee

An Interview Conducted by
Malca Chall

Copy No. 1



1978 by The Regents of the University of California



Elizabeth Rudel Gatov
1960

(San Francisco Chronicle)

Elizabeth Rudel Gatov

Elizabeth "Libby" Rudel Gatov, former treasurer of the United States under President John F. Kennedy, died Saturday of natural causes at her Kentfield home. She was 85.

A resident of Kentfield since 1944, she was active in local, state and national politics, most often as a campaign chairwoman for Democratic candidates. In addition to working on the campaigns of Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, Robert Kennedy, George McGovern, Alan Cranston and John Tunney, she was the Democratic National Committeewoman for California from 1956 to 1965. She also served from 1965 to 1977 on the executive committee of Planned Parenthood/World Population.

Mrs. Gatov was born and raised in Montreal. She attended Masters School in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., Smith College and the University of Michigan, where she earned her bachelor's degree.

At Smith, in the early 1930s, she was friends with a classmate who drowned herself in a campus pond because she was single and pregnant and could not find a doctor willing to perform an abortion. The memory of this incident moved her to volunteer for Planned Parenthood.

In 1971 she established the first lobbying committee for Planned Parenthood, and in 1974 she became the group's first national public affairs chairwoman. She was proud to claim partial credit for California's Welfare Reform Act of 1970, which allowed women to receive public funding for abortions.

She became acquainted with then-Senator Kennedy in 1956 and campaigned for him in 1960. When he left a San Francisco fund-raising dinner at the Fairmont before mingling with the crowd, she told him that was no way to treat voters. In 1961 he repaid her good counsel with the treasurer appointment.

She left the Kennedy administration after a year to return to California to marry Al Gatov. Her husband died in 1978.

Her long resume included stints as a reporter for the San Rafael Independent Journal, political science lecturer at Armstrong College in Berkeley and member of the California Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Committee.

She is survived by her daughter, Jane Jackson of Oakland; her son, Daniel Smith of Kentfield; four granddaughters; and two great-grandsons.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. February 8 at St. John's Episcopal Church, 14 Lagunitas Road, Ross.

Memorial donations may be sent to Planned Parenthood Golden Gate, 2211 Palm Ave., San Mateo, 94403; Coro Foundation, c/o Roseanne Junker, 690 Market St. San Francisco, 94104; or to the donor's favorite charity.

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PREFACE

The following interview is one of a series of tape-recorded memoirs in the California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project. The series has been designed to study the political activities of a representative group of California women who became active in politics during the years between the passage of the woman's suffrage amendment and the current feminist movement--roughly the years between 1920 and 1965. They represent a variety of views: conservative, moderate, liberal, and radical, although most of them worked within the Democratic and Republican parties. They include elected and appointed officials at national, state, and local governmental levels. For many the route to leadership was through the political party--primarily those divisions of the party reserved for women.

Regardless of the ultimate political level attained, these women have all worked in election campaigns on behalf of issues and candidates. They have raised funds, addressed envelopes, rung doorbells, watched polls, staffed offices, given speeches, planned media coverage, and when permitted, helped set policy. While they enjoyed many successes, a few also experienced defeat as candidates for public office.

Their different family and cultural backgrounds, their social attitudes, and their personalities indicate clearly that there is no typical woman political leader; their candid, first-hand observations and their insights about their experiences provide fresh source material for the social and political history of women in the past half century.

In a broader framework their memoirs provide valuable insights into the political process as a whole. The memoirists have thoughtfully discussed details of party organization and the work of the men and women who served the party. They have analysed the process of selecting party leaders and candidates, running campaigns, raising funds, and drafting party platforms, as well as the more subtle aspects of political life such as maintaining harmony and coping with fatigue, frustration, and defeat. Perceived through it all are the pleasures of friendships, struggles, and triumphs in a common cause.

The California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project has been financed by both an outright and a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Matching funds were provided by the Rockefeller Foundation for the Helen Gahagan Douglas unit of the project, and by individuals who were interested in supporting memoirs of their friends and colleagues. Professors Judith Blake Davis, Albert Lepawsky, and Walton Bean have served as principal investigators during the period July 1975-December 1977 that the project was underway. This series is the second phase of the Women in Politics Oral History Project, the first of which dealt with the experiences of eleven women who had been leaders and rank-and-file workers in the suffrage movement.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons significant in the history of the West and the nation. The Office is under the administrative supervision of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library. Interviews were conducted by Amelia R. Fry, Miriam Stein, Gabrielle Morris, and Malca Chall.

20 May 1977
Regional Oral History Office
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University of California at Berkeley

Malca Chall, Project Director
Women in Politics Oral History Project

Willa Baum, Department Head
Regional Oral History Office

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CALIFORNIA WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

March Fong Eu, *High Achieving Nonconformist in Local and State Government*. 1977

Jean Wood Fuller, *Organizing Women: Careers in Volunteer Politics and Government Administration*. 1977

Elizabeth R. Gatov, *Grassroots Party Organizer to United States Treasurer*. 1977

Bernice Hubbard May, *A Native Daughter's Leadership in Public Affairs*. 1976

Hulda Hoover McLean, *A Conservative Crusader for Good Government*. 1977

Julia Porter, *Dedicated Democrat and City Planner*. 1977

Vera Schultz, *Marin County Perspective on Ideals and Realities in State and Local Government*. 1977

Clara Shirpser, *One Women's Role in Democratic Party Politics*. 1975

Elizabeth Snyder, *California's First Woman State Party Chairman*. 1977

Eleanor Wagner, *Independent Political Coalitions: Electoral, Legislative, and Community*. 1977

Carolyn Wolfe, *Educating for Citizenship: A Career in Community Affairs and the Democratic Party, 1906-1976*. 1977

Interviews in Process

Frances Albrier

La Rue McCormick

Marjorie Benedict

Emily Pike

Odessa Cox

Wanda Sankary

Pauline Davis

Hope Mendoza Schecter

Ann Eliaser

Carmen Warschaw

Kimiko Fujii

Rosalind Wyman

Elinor R. Heller

Mildred Younger

Patricia R. Hitt

Zita Remley

Lucile Hosmer

Helen Gahagan Douglas Unit

Interviews in Process

Helen Gahagan Douglas

Juanita Barbee

Rachel Bell

Fay Bennett

Evelyn Chavoor

Alis De Sola

Tilford Dudley

Walter Gahagan

Arthur Goldschmidt

Elizabeth Goldschmidt

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INTRODUCTION

Self-effacing, soft-spoken, warm, charming -- few upon meeting her would realize that they were talking to one of the most successful, tough-minded, experienced, and respected leaders in recent California political history. Yet no other words come close to describing the influence that Elizabeth Rudel Gatov has had on the life of the Democratic Party in the state over the past 25 years, a period marked by the rise of that party to its present dominance. (In the 20th Century prior to 1958, the Democratic Party had held the governorship for only four years and had never controlled the state legislature.) In a field in which participants rise and fall with great frequency, she has -- by expert opinion -- been state co-chairperson, coordinator, or Northern California manager since 1954 of more statewide campaigns than any other person in political memory. Candidates for President, Governor, and United States Senator have sought her out -- some successfully -- knowing that her endorsement would mobilize many others who looked to "Libby" for an assessment of political quality, that her leadership would bring with it practical and forward-looking political advice, and her active participation organizational skills matched by few on the state scene.

Born in Canada of American parents, Elizabeth Gatov attended Smith College and graduated from the University of Michigan, where she majored in Far Eastern studies. Her professional career -- combined with service as a mother and grandmother -- has involved journalism, business, banking, and leadership in many civic organizations, most recently Planned Parenthood in which she has played an active role at both state and national levels.

Through it all, politics has been a dominant force, commencing in 1948 when her Marin County neighbor, Roger Kent, was looking for a co-chairperson of his campaign to win a Congressional seat. She was selected, Kent reports, when he learned from a friend that vocational aptitude tests she had recently taken indicated she "should either be running a university or heading a division of General Motors." But it was politics that captured these talents, first at the congressional district level-- from which she quickly moved into prominence in Northern California and then statewide election campaigns: Richard Graves, Edmund G. Brown, Sr., Alan Cranston, John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, John Tunney, George McGovern, March Fong, William M. Roth, Morris Udall. In 1956, she was elected Democratic National Committeewoman -- at a time when there was only one such post for each state -- and served with distinction until 1965. This period was highlighted by her appointment as Treasurer of the United States by President John F. Kennedy. She returned to California in 1962, to continue

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as a leader in state political affairs.

What characteristics have marked the remarkable career of this lovely and talented woman? The New York Times quoted one influential California Democrat that "She never rubs people the wrong way," while another said, "She gets up before a roomful of mad Democrats, pours oil on warring factions, charms them with her smile, and the fighting ends." Widely read in both domestic and international policy issues, deeply dedicated to the battle against social injustice, experienced in the "old politics" of party and precinct organization and the "new politics" of television, computers and polls, objective and detached when giving advice but passionately loyal when committed, Libby Gatov represents all that is best in American politics. Respect, trust, integrity -- her life is a personal rebuke and antidote to Watergate, a personal testimony to the glory of the democratic process at its best.

Eugene C. Lee, Director
Institute of Governmental Studies

28 February 1977
University of California
Berkeley, California

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

For upwards of thirty years, following her initial introduction to California Democratic party politics in 1948, Elizabeth Gatov has been a major leader in this state's Democratic party. Whether working in local Marin County precincts, serving on state and national Democratic party committees, or planning campaign strategies, Libby, as she was always known to her fellow Democrats, carved out a distinctive place for herself as a volunteer in politics. During those three decades of dedicated party work she developed and applied her special skills in organization, policy analysis, candidate selection, and campaign techniques; she also mastered, or adapted an already learned capacity to be tough, mollifying, outspoken, or quiet, depending on the requirements of the specific situation.

The introduction by Eugene Lee, the brief biography, and the table of contents to this memoir, all provide a handy outline of Mrs. Gatov's political career and those events in her background which preceded and accompanied it. But it is the memoir itself which yields the relevant details and the reasons why she could move from grass-roots organizer to Treasurer of the United States within thirteen years; why she held her post as Democratic National Committee-woman for California for an unprecedented nine years; and why major candidates continue to seek her out to chair their election campaigns. It is the memoir which reveals how her experience in politics has influenced her subsequent career as a teacher of political science, and how it has been brought to bear in the shaping of public policy in the field of family planning.

In discussing her life, in answering all kinds of questions, even the simple-minded ones, Libby Gatov was articulate and candid, seeming always to accept the two-fold nature of the California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project which has been to acquire background on women qua women, as well as to obtain related material for this office's ongoing study of California political history. As a strong "Pat" Brown loyalist, she has added substantially to an understanding of the 1952-1966 Goodwin Knight-Edmund Brown, Sr. era in California politics, as well as many of the major state and national Democrats who were active during that period.

Because she teaches political science classes at Armstrong Business College only a short distance from the Berkeley campus, Mrs. Gatov agreed to come into the Regional Oral History Office after class to record the interviews. Thus all twelve taping sessions were held between one and three o'clock either on Monday or Wednesday, and at weekly intervals unless other scheduled appointments or vacations intervened. We began November 17, 1975 and finished May 19, 1976.

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At our first non-taping conference, she gave me a brief resumé of her education and political career, and we agreed on the topics for the first several interviews. Eventually I developed an outline which blocked out the topics for the recording sessions. Some of these, I later realized, showed my lack of knowledge about the structure and function of the Democratic party, but Mrs. Gatov graciously and gradually taught me the facts. This information can now be passed on to readers who also need a grounding in political party history from the position of the neophyte.

Throughout her career in politics, Mrs. Gatov has managed to acquire and save letters, memoranda, newspaper clippings, and other memorabilia which are so much a part of political party activity. I wanted to study these primary sources, in order to broaden the scope of the questions and to correlate the data in the papers with the interview, particularly because, in 1969, after being interviewed briefly by the Kennedy Oral History Project, Mrs. Gatov promised her papers to the John F. Kennedy Library.

Several times in the early course of the recording, when I asked Mrs. Gatov if I could see the papers, an unbelieving look crossed her handsome, expressive face. Eventually she must have stopped worrying about whether she should let me see them, in their (to her) disorganized state, how I would use them, or how she could possibly get them onto the campus. Little by little, in briefcases, in cardboard cartons, and in suitcases the papers arrived. Gradually I checked through them for the background which, as I had anticipated, was invaluable.

Mrs. Gatov allowed me to keep original duplicates, and also to make copies of other selected papers for the files of the Knight-Brown Era Public Affairs Project, and to insert, where relevant, into this volume. She also agreed to placing copies of her speeches, and some other material related to her years in politics, and her term as Treasurer, in The Bancroft Library to accompany the memoir. This is only a small portion of her total collection which will be deposited in the Kennedy Library in Boston.

The time I saved by not traveling to and from Mrs. Gatov's large and comfortable home in Kentfield to tape the interviews was lost later during the transcribing and editing process. We had recorded in the one room which is completely separated from the office's crowded three-room suite, but such was our concentration we were unaware of the carpenters and plumbers who were installing sprinkling devices in the rooms and halls around us, and unaware of the noise from the university's shuttle bus Humphrey-go-Bart plying its route directly outside the open window. On tape, Mrs. Gatov's deep-toned mellow voice would often nearly disappear in the surrounding din, all of which was clearly picked up by the tape recorder.

By very careful listening most of the dialogue could be retrieved. Nevertheless in addition to the usual editorial questions dealing with facts, or requesting supplementary information, Libby Gatov had to be asked frequently to fill in missed phrases, or to choose between two words, each of which seemed

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to be what she had said.

On February 7, 1977 she picked up the first half of her lengthy manuscript for review, and on April 18, the final chapters. On the day she returned the latter we looked through her pictures to decide which to include in the volume. On November 9 we met again to discuss other final details. On that day Libby Gatov and I preceded our conference with lunch during which I caught up with some of her personal and political life: her decisions about the candidates for whom she would work in the 1978 state elections, her concerns about the effects of recent legislation on family planning efforts, the ERA, the Bakke case, and other problems in the forefront of American politics at that time. Because of her interest in vital social and political questions and her willingness to put considerable effort into campaigns on behalf of candidates and issues, volunteer political action clearly will continue to occupy Elizabeth Gatov's life in much the same way as it has throughout the years which comprise this oral history.

Malca Chall
Interviewer-Editor

3 January 1978
Regional Oral History Office
486, The Bancroft Library
University of California
Berkeley, California

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Elizabeth Gatov: Brief Biography

- 1911 Born, Montreal, Canada.
- 1917-1925 Private school - Montreal.
- 1925-1929 Masters School, Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.
- 1929-1931 Smith College
- 1935-1937 University of Michigan, B.A.
- 1937-1941 Lived in Southern Pines, North Carolina: directed segregated well-baby clinics; library trustee; teacher in private school.
- 1944 Moved to Kentfield, California.
- 1945-1948 Member, boards of directors of: Marin County Red Cross, TB Association, Sunny Hills School, San Francisco Jr. League.
- 1948,1950 Congressional campaigns for Roger Kent: women's chairman; organizing chairman.
- 1948-1950 Reporter, then feature editor, San Rafael Independent Journal.
- 1950-1952 Congressional district cochairman, First Congressional District.
- 1951 Public relations, Marin County Red Cross.
- 1952 Member, Attorney General Edmund G. Brown, Sr. "favorite son" delegation to Democratic National Convention, defeated by Estes Kefauver.
- 1952 Reporter for San Rafael Independent Journal to Democratic National Convention.
- 1952-1953 Coro Foundation: intern, staff.
- 1953-1958 California Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Committee.
- 1954 Cochairman, Richard Graves gubernatorial campaign.
- 1955 Chairman, Marin County Democratic Central Committee.
- 1956 Delegate, Democratic National Convention.
- 1956-1965 Democratic National Committeewoman for California; executive committee.

- 1958 Manager (Northern California), Clair Engle Senate campaign.
- 1960 Delegate, Democratic National Convention.
- 1960 Deputy Labor Commissioner, appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Sr.
- 1961-1962 Treasurer of the United States, appointed by President John F. Kennedy.
- 1962 Cochairman, Edmund G. Brown, Sr., gubernatorial campaign.
- 1962 Founder and vice-president, First Savings and Loan Association, San Rafael, California.
- 1964 Delegate, Democratic National Convention.
- 1964 Cochairman, Alan Cranston Senate primary campaign.
- 1964 Cochairman, Johnson for President, general election campaign.
- 1964-1966 Trustee, Coro Foundation.
- 1965-1977 Member, executive committee Planned Parenthood/World Population.
- 1966 Cochairman (Northern California), Edmund G. Brown, Sr., gubernatorial campaign.
- 1968 Cochairman (Northern California), Robert Kennedy, presidential primary.
- 1968 Coordinator (Northern California), Alan Cranston Senate general election campaign.
- 1968-1969 Trustee, Starr King School of Ministry.
- 1970 Cochairman, John Tunney Senate campaign.
- 1971 Co-founder Public Education and Research Committee (Planned Parenthood), California.
- 1972 Cochairman (Northern California), George McGovern presidential campaign.
- 1973-- Distinguished Lecturer, Political Science, Armstrong College, Berkeley.
- 1973-1977 Chairman, Public Affairs Committee, Planned Parenthood/World Population.
- 1974 Steering Committee, Alan Cranston Senate campaign.

- 1974 Chairman (Northern California), William M. Roth gubernatorial campaign.
- 1974 Chairman, March Fong Eu secretary of state campaign.
- 1976 Organizing Committee, Morris Udall, presidential primary.
- 1977 Trustee, Institutes of Medical Sciences.
Member, Citizens Committee for Sex Education, Tamalpais High School District.

Honors:

- 1960 San Francisco Chronicle, Brass Medallion in recognition of many contributions to the Bay Area.
- 1961 San Francisco Examiner, Distinguished Woman of the Bay Area.
- 1962 Press and Union League Club of San Francisco, Black Cat for speech given at club luncheon.
- 1962 Coro Foundation for distinguished public service.
- 1977 Coro Foundation as mistress of ceremonies for its 35th anniversary celebration.
- 1978 Planned Parenthood, Alameda-San Francisco; Lifetime Membership, in recognition of her significant contributions to the advancement of voluntary family planning.

I FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION
(Interview 1, November 17, 1975)
[begin Tape 1, side 1]

Chall: [while testing tape recorder] Do you want to say something to me?

Gatov: Yes, I had a most interesting weekend this past weekend. I was down in Los Angeles at a pre-campaign planning session with Senator Tunney, who's an old, dear friend. I was highly flattered to be invited.

There were just seven of us, including him. We went over some polls that were done for him. He was amazed to discover that practically nobody knows that he's even been in the Senate! [Laughs]

Chall: That's a great problem for a senator who wants to be known as an incumbent!

Just for the record, would you give me the full name your family gave you, and the date of your birth, and where you were born?

Gatov: I was born Elizabeth Jane Rudel, on April 27, 1911, in Westmount, Canada. Westmount is a suburb entirely surrounded by the city of Montreal.

Chall: Like Piedmont being surrounded by Oakland [California]?

Gatov: Yes; it's an English-speaking enclave, surrounded by a French-speaking city.

Parents

Chall: How did you happen to be born in Montreal? Were your parents Canadian?

Gatov: No, my parents were American. They were both from Cincinnati; my mother was of English background, and my father's family was from Alsace-Lorraine. His ancestors had come over here sometime in the

Gatov: middle eighteen-sixties, I believe, or a little before that. When my father was a young man, I believe he was about twenty-seven at this time, he was offered a job by the Fairbanks Morse Scale people in Montreal to come up there and be their Canadian manager.

Chall: He was in Cincinnati at the time?

Gatov: He was in Cincinnati at the time, and he took the offer and went to Montreal in 1903. I have two older brothers who were born there, one six years older, and one three years older. I'm number three, and there were four of us all together. I have a younger brother.

Chall: You were the only daughter?

Gatov: The only daughter, in a very enviable situation. [Laughs] I later came to realize.

Chall: I see. What was your father's name?

Gatov: Clarence Merrill Rudel.

Chall: Was that a family name, Merrill?

Gatov: I presume so. Unfortunately, I didn't know either of his parents. They were both dead before I was born. I really grew up without grandparents. I just have to assume that's a family name.

Chall: So he was the sales manager for this company?

Gatov: The general manager.

Chall: For Canada, all of Canada?

Gatov: For all of Canada, yes.

Chall: Did he travel?

Gatov: Not that I recall. Of course, in those early days, I wasn't around. Then in the year I was born, he started his own company, the Rudel Machinery Company. This is why I don't remember him traveling, because he did stay pretty much in Montreal. He went to Toronto, where he had a branch office. He remained in the machine tool business, until his death, with that company.

Chall: In Montreal?

Gatov: In Montreal; and then about four years before he died, he became president of Canadian Vickers, which is a structural steel, and in those days, also shipbuilding, airplane-building, and bridge-building company.

That was of course, in the depths of the Depression.

Chall: When did he die?

Gatov: In 1938, of a ruptured appendix, now diagnosed.

Chall: What was his background, that would get him into machinery?

Gatov: I wish I could tell you more. He was one of ten children, and towards the bottom. I think he was the seventh. He had a sister, of whom he was very fond, who used to come visit us occasionally. But really, he didn't seem to have very much contact with his other brothers or maybe sisters. I never heard very much about them.

Chall: No aunts and uncles that you knew? You didn't know others even though they were such a large family?

Gatov: Not on that side of the family. I have a suspicion that he had more energy and drive than possibly the others, and that they just lost track. They possibly resented him because he was quite a successful businessman. I got the feeling that they were scattered around and didn't do very much.

Chall: And the name Rudel is not one that you've come across?

Gatov: Yes, I have, because my oldest brother had done some looking into this; apparently there were three brothers who came to the United States from Alsace-Lorraine about the middle eighteen-fifties. One of the brothers went to Albany, and there's a family of Rudels in New York. I don't know that Julius Rudel, the symphony conductor, is any part of that. There are very few that are spelled the same way, but there are quite a few spelled with two d's and two l's.

And then there was a branch that went to Toronto, and another branch that went to Detroit. That's about, really, all I know.

Chall: What kind of an education did your father have? Do you know?

Gatov: Yes. He didn't go beyond high school.

Chall: He was a high school graduate?

Gatov: Yes, he was a high school graduate. His father was in the book publishing business of some sort. As I recall, my mother said that they made, among other things, the kinds of ledgers that they used to make--those old leather-bound books with lined pages that you see in county offices and courthouses.

Chall: So your father was really a self-made man?

Gatov: Yes, he definitely was.

Chall: Apparently what he did then was to take up an opportunity that was offered as a young man. Do you know what he did before he was twenty-seven and went to Montreal?

Gatov: Yes, he worked for a company that's still going, called the American Tool Works, in Cincinnati. He apparently started in the machine tool business as a young man, and I think it was through his connection with the tool works that he got the offer in Montreal.

Chall: And so he just stayed in that field and stayed in Montreal? Now tell me about your mother. Her name?

Gatov: Her name was Anna May Ryder. Her father was a lawyer, her mother died when she was about nine, and her father remarried. She had a half-brother by that marriage and a full brother by her own mother.

I rather gather that she led a more affluent life than my father's family did. She seemed to have friends, at any rate, in Lexington, Kentucky, and Covington, Kentucky, named Coney. I heard her speak about going to visit friends there, and I suppose because she didn't have a mother, that she developed these relationships, and she probably spent a good deal of time with people other than her family.

Chall: Where was she born?

Gatov: In Cincinnati, also. They were both born in suburbs, but I forget the names of the suburbs.

Chall: You don't know if her parents had migrated from someplace else?

Gatov: Her parents had come from England.

Chall: Both from England?

Gatov: Both from England, and her father was a lawyer. My grandfather participated on the Union side in the Civil War. I remember her telling me about that. Somebody has his sword.

Chall: And what about her education?

Gatov: She graduated from high school also.

Chall: Did they have a religion in common?

Gatov: No. [Laughs] This is very funny. My father was brought up a Baptist, and I gather, quite a strict Baptist family. My mother was brought up Episcopalian, and Father used to remark that he had never been given to smoking or drinking until after he had married my mother, [laughs] who believed that people should be able to, if they wished. And she didn't care for his, what she thought, were rather prim Baptist inhibitions.

My father liked to play cards a lot, and Mother didn't particularly, but they had friends who did, and they would often come over on Sunday evenings for bridge. Father would start to draw the curtains, and Mother would open the curtains and say, "Clarence, if you don't want the neighbors to see you playing cards on Sunday, you shouldn't play cards on Sunday!" [Laughs]

But it was never a matter of conflict between them. It was really more a matter of humor.

Chall: And how were you all raised, in Montreal and in church?

Gatov: We were all brought up Episcopalian. Anglicans, of course, is what they called it in Canada, and Westmount. We went to St. Mathias church, and to Sunday school regularly. But I wouldn't say that my parents were religious. They just felt that it was something that we should do.

Chall: What did your mother do in the home?

Gatov: Well, she had a very pleasant life. [Laughs] Now that I'm the age I am, I can look at her with--some envy. She had a very pleasant life indeed. Always plenty of servants in the house.

Chall: French-Canadian girls?

Gatov: No, the French-Canadians, I'm sorry to say--a lot of this will come out later--but there was a tremendous amount of conflict between the English and the French. No, the people that we had were usually Scottish.

We had a pair of sisters. One of the sisters married the German gardener, who was then taught to drive a car, and he became the chauffeur as well as the gardener. The third sister used to come in and polish the silver and do what the other two hadn't done.

Chall: They weren't live-in?

Gatov: Oh, yes.

Chall: They were?

Gatov: Oh, yes, the whole family lived in.

Chall: So you had two sisters--

Gatov: --living in, and the husband of one.

Chall: And he was the gardener and chauffeur?

Gatov: He was the husband of the cook.

Chall: Did you have nannies when you were all little?

Gatov: Originally, the sister of the cook, Grace, from Scotland, was the nurse. She came over from Scotland about the time I was born. I don't know who they'd had before that.

I arrived in 1911, and Canada got into World War I in 1914, and my father's business became very prosperous, as a result. He was also put in charge, by the government, of the supervision of a number of munitions factories, and so forth. He was a very busy man, and came out of the war obviously more affluent, I can see now, than he was when we went in.

Chall: This is the time that you were growing up?

Gatov: I was three when the war began, so I do recall it beginning, but that's about all I recall. My uncle, my mother's brother, in an officer's uniform, had me on his knee, and he had a mustache, which he hadn't had before. [Laughs]

I recall being stuck by the mustache.

Chall: Was Westmount an upper-class English suburb?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: So your parents really fit right into it?

Gatov: Yes, except for the fact that they were Americans, something that I think they hadn't expected to have to deal with, in Canada. There was then, as there is now, a good deal of anti-American feeling. Sometimes it's subtle, and sometimes it's not so subtle.

Gatov: I don't know that it caused them any particular problems, I don't recall that it did. They seemed to have a very active social life. I remember one function my mother gave that went on for two days, and I was moved out for two days. [Laughs]

Chall: Why was that?

Gatov: Well, she had two receptions, apparently. I recall that the furniture was moved, potted palms were brought in. When I got back, after the second day, in time for my supper, the house was just redolent of perfume and flowers. It was overwhelming! [Laughs]

She became involved in a lot of charitable activities. Something called the IODE, which was a British title, and--I forget what it's called--the Protestant Infants' Home, which was a home for illegitimate children, I think; finding them, ultimately, foster homes, I suppose, or adoptive parents.

And she was interested in hospitals. I recall her as being a person who, in those years, was quite active within the community.

Chall: Was there any kind of suffrage movement happening in Canada at the time, that you can remember?

Gatov: No. She's told me that I was very interested in admiring a woman Member of Parliament. This must have been in the twenties, a woman named Anna something. But I don't happen to recall.

Chall: The Canadian Parliament.

Gatov: Yes. But I don't recall my parents being involved politically, or even discussing it very much, until much later.

Chall: Did you have any contact with your mother's father?

Gatov: No, he was also dead. Her brother, Escott Ryder, was married to a woman named Nan Barnaby, from St. John, New Brunswick. They had no children, and Aunt Nan, looking back, was a most unusual woman.

She wore split skirts that were sort of like culottes, and rode bicycles, and used to take us on bicycle picnics, and canoeing picnics. She was a very vigorous person whom we loved, and she wasn't condescending to us in any way.

She also had a marvelous gift for storytelling. She used to regale me with the adventures of Hope Strong, which came completely out of her head. [Laughs] They were very exciting to me when I was six or seven, I guess.

Chall: Where did they live?

Gatov: They lived quite near us. And when my uncle was overseas in World War I, she lived with us all the time. She and my mother were very close friends, and she was just part of the family.

Chall: Does that mean that your mother's brother chose also to live in Canada?

Gatov: Oh, I forgot to mention that. Yes, my father, after he started his own company, then invited my uncle to move in and become his partner. So that's how they happened to be there. And then my uncle married. I guess he hadn't been married to Aunt Nan very long before he went off to the war, but in any case, she lived with us.

And then he came back to Montreal.

Brothers

Chall: Now let's see--you had a brother who was six years older than you?

Gatov: Yes, Tom Rudel, who lives in New York, and has his own machine tool business.

Chall: Oh, is that so? And then there was another brother a couple of years younger?

Gatov: Yes, Jack Rudel, whom I was closest to. He was three years older than I, and he went, for boarding school, to Choate, where he managed to graduate straight into the machine tool business in 1928.

Chall: And where is he?

Gatov: He's now retired and living in Sarasota, and has a summer home outside of Montreal.

Chall: Where did he have his machine tool business?

Gatov: He took over my father's business.

Chall: It's interesting, the boys following right in their father's footsteps. And then the younger brother?

Gatov: My younger brother, Bill, was in a variety of businesses. He graduated from Princeton, as did the oldest brother. He was in a variety of things before he went into World War II, and was captured at the battle of Kasserine Pass, in North Africa.

He was a prisoner of the Germans for the next two and a half years. He was married before he went. And when he came back, my oldest brother took him into his company in New York, which was going nicely by this time, so Bill remained in that until he too retired just a few years ago. But the oldest brother has not yet retired.

Chall: And did the middle brother go to college?

Gatov: No. He went to Choate in the days when Mr. George St. John--I don't know if you've ever heard of him.... He was a remarkable headmaster. And my brother Jack was a marvelous hockey player, among other things, but he didn't read very much, and wasn't a good student.

They apparently thought so highly of him that they gave him a sort of special kind of diploma, and he was president of the student body, and he was offered an athletic scholarship at Yale, but my father wouldn't let him take it.

He said, "You either go in the front door, or you don't go!" I recall Jack being at summer school just about every summer all the time he was at boarding school. To this day, he barely reads anything. Not that he's not interested, but he gets his information through other sources. I've never seen him sit down and read a book, and rarely a newspaper.

Chall: Maybe he was one of those people who just didn't learn to read right when he was younger.

Gatov: I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

Chall: Nowadays, they'd be diagnosing him very seriously: "You must learn to read!"

Gatov: I was sort of the reader in the family. We had a library, off the large front hall, and the library had a conservatory on the next side, so it was always bright and sunny, even in the wintertime. There was a very large, comfortable chair there, and the Books of Knowledge, and a whole lot of really fascinating things. A set of Dickens and Mark Twain, among others.

I'm surprised, as I think back a little. My father got interested in biographies, and read more and more as he got older. I don't know why they got the books, unless they had shelf space to fill up. They got the books, in any case.

Education in Montreal and the United States

Chall: Were they interested in your education?

Gatov: Very much.

Chall: And the education of the boys?

Gatov: Very much. My father, like so many parents who didn't go to college, was determined that his children would.

Chall: I see, so that was expected.

Gatov: It was expected. It was just part of the routine. We all went to private schools, staffed by faculty who mostly came from England. At least the women who taught in the school I went to, The Study, as it was called, were all Englishwomen.

I mentioned the anti-American feeling earlier. It became stronger after World War I, and our parents felt that we were getting too one-sided a view, so as each of us became fourteen, we were sent to this country to boarding school.

That had an effect. Of course, we were also born with dual citizenship, I should have mentioned that. My father became a British subject in 1916, but that was after the last of us was born. We had the option of being American citizens at twenty-one, or Canadian citizens, which we were at birth.

Chall: In these private schools that you attended in Montreal--was there a reason why you were sent to private schools rather than public schools?

Gatov: Yes. The public schools were not regarded as very good by my parents. I have no idea what they were really like. They didn't think they were very good.

Chall: In Westmount itself?

Gatov: Well, the private school I went to was in Montreal, but it was nearby, just a matter of blocks.

Chall: Was it a girls' school? These weren't coeducational private schools?

Gatov: All girls. Oh no, not coeducational. We wore blue serge uniforms, like jumpers, with the school seal on the breast.

Chall: Every day?

Gatov: Every day.

Chall: What was the name of your school?

Gatov: It was called The Study.

Chall: Just that?

Gatov: Yes, The Study. It was run by a Miss Gascoigne, who was a very stern woman.

Chall: That sounds almost like a French name.

Gatov: I think it's actually Welsh.

Chall: Only women taught in that school?

Gatov: Only women.

Chall: Were they generally unmarried women?

Gatov: Yes. All.

Chall: I guess that was necessary in order to teach. If you got married you didn't teach any more. And the boys' school?

Gatov: The boys went to Lower Canada College. It was not a college as we would use the term. There they were until they were fourteen. They had uniforms also.

Chall: And taught only by men?

Gatov: Men.

Chall: No women in that school?

Gatov: No women in that school. After we all went off, one went back, Jack, the second one.

Chall: So let's see. When you were fourteen, that was 1925.

Gatov: I went to Dobbs.

Chall: To Dobbs?

Gatov: Dobbs Ferry, the Masters School. And I spent four years there.

Chall: So that was your high school, at Dobbs Ferry. Where is Dobbs Ferry?

Gatov: Just north of New York, on the Hudson River.

Chall: Why was that school chosen?

Gatov: Well, my parents inquired around. I should mention here that my parents had begun going to North Carolina, to Pinehurst, at intervals in the fall and spring. Father liked to play golf, and so did Mother. They used to go down there for vacations.

So they had many friends in this country, and they began inquiring about good girls' schools and good boys' schools; Dobbs was one of the girls' schools that they looked at. I went too.

One of the reasons that we picked Dobbs was because it was so close to New York. It was easy for them to take the train in or out of New York to come see me. In those days, Dobbs had an excellent reputation as a college-preparatory school, with a high rate of acceptance for seniors.

Chall: And the boys, where did they go?

Gatov: One went to Lawrenceville, and two went to Choate.

Chall: So your parents really had it in mind that you would all go on?

Gatov: Yes, indeed. [Laughs]

Chall: Where is Lawrenceville?

Gatov: Lawrenceville is about four miles from Princeton. It's in New Jersey between Trenton and Princeton.

Chall: Now, in terms of their expectations for you all, was there a different expectation for you, as the girl?

Gatov: No, and I'm just so grateful that there wasn't. I realize now what a difference this has made in my life. I recall my father saying about something, with irritation, "Just because you're growing up to be a woman is no reason that you should also be stupid!" [Laughs]

This was really the way he felt; I had no excuses because I was a girl. I didn't expect anything different. I know, and I think my brothers knew, that I did get quite a lot of special treatment, because I was the only girl. There is that father-daughter relationship, that, when it's going well, is just great.

Chall: And it did go well?

Gatov: Yes, it did go well. He had a great sense of humor, and he enjoyed being with us, after we began to grow up. I don't think he paid much attention to us when we were very small.

We had a summer home outside of Montreal, in Chateauguay on the St. Lawrence River. It was very spacious, and we built a tennis court, which was kept in good condition. I was expected to learn how to play tennis, and did. Father taught me, and we used to play doubles with the other members of the family. And I was supposed to learn how to play golf, and did; and know how to ski and skate.

These things were--well, I just got the feeling that I was supposed to do whatever there was to do.

Chall: And the boys were doing it too?

Gatov: The boys were doing it too, and the second brother, Jack, was really marvelous to me. He gave me the clear feeling that I could go along with him and do whatever he did as long as I "wouldn't tell." No squealing on what happened. As long as I learned to keep my mouth shut, I could go with him. Of course, that was more interesting than anything else I could think of doing. After I learned to ski--I don't think I was very old, probably nine or ten--my brothers did a lot of ski jumping, which was big in those days, there.

So, as a special treat, I was allowed to go along and side-step up and down the landing area to break it up, keep it from packing to ice. It was very hard work; but I felt it was the greatest honor!
[Laughs]

It was slave labor, but I didn't know it. It got me there, and otherwise I never in the world would have been that involved. I wasn't a ski jumper. Girls didn't do that.

Chall: Did you ever think of trying it?

Gatov: Yes, I'd go over little jumps, two-foot jumps or three-foot jumps.

Chall: Did your brothers survive all this without broken limbs?

Gatov: Yes. They wore very primitive harnesses, compared to what they use today.

Chall: Where did they ski?

Gatov: On Mt. Royal and Westmount mountain on Côte des Neiges Road. It means "hill of snow." The hill did get a lot of snow. The east slope was the ski jump, but we used to ski all over the mountain. It was mostly park. It was even more park then than it is today. It was very close. We'd take the streetcar, take our skis along, and in a few minutes there we were.

I have to say, having listened to other people talk about their childhood, I don't think I'm misjudging it when I say I had a happy one. I don't mean to sound as if it was all sweetness and light; it wasn't, of course. But, I can't recall our parents creating any feeling of tension with us.

I'm sure they had their disputes. They were very strong-minded people, and they must have. But I can't remember them shouting at each other, quarrelling. If they did, we weren't aware of it. Maybe this is the advantage of big houses. Anyhow, we grew up with a feeling of security, we took--I took--our comfortable way of living quite for granted.

I wasn't aware, inside my head, how people lived in the poverty that they did--though I could see it. I knew about the slums; we drove through them every time we went back and forth to our country place. I could see it in the country too.

But somehow it made no dent, at that time, and I just--well, I was very much of a vegetable, I think. I grew up without any feeling that life was ever going to be different. For instance, it never occurred to anybody to teach me how to cook, and when I got to boarding school, I had to learn how to make a bed. [Laughs]

I didn't pick up after myself, particularly. Life just went along in a very pleasant, easy way. It was an active life. I had lots of friends. My recollection is that we had a lot of my parents' friends around a good deal of the time, and my brothers' friends, and my friends; I don't mean it was a beehive of activity, but there were a lot of things going on. It wasn't in any way isolated.

Chall: And since you had so much help, your mother had no problem? She could be social and gracious?

Gatov: Oh yes. She didn't boil an egg. [Laughs]

Chall: She never did cook, as far as you know?

Gatov: Not that I remember. And she managed to maintain that pretty much to the end of her life. [Laughs]

Chall: I don't think I have her dates.

Gatov: She was born in 1880, and died in 1969. She was eighty-nine. My father was born in 1874.

Chall: Did your mother come away from Montreal, ultimately?

Gatov: Yes. After Father died--well, before he died, they had sold the house that we'd had in Westmount--9 Murray Avenue--that I'd grown up in, because by this time, we were all out of boarding school. The youngest one, too.

They built a house in Pinehurst, had an apartment in the Gleneagles, in Montreal, and they kept the summer place outside of Montreal. After he died, Mother sold that.

My Canadian brother, Jack, by this time was married, and he lived in Knowlton, a very pleasant English community, about sixty-five miles south of Montreal. They had a house, also, in Westmount, where they lived in the winter.

So during the summers, Mother would leave Pinehurst, and spend her summers with them. They built a little house for her next to theirs. She and they were very, very close. She got along awfully well with all her daughters-in-law, but this one, Ruby, in particular.

Chall: How did you get along with your mother?

Gatov: I think that we had at least the normal mother-daughter conflicts, which eased as time went on, probably because we both mellowed a bit. [Laughs] My parents were quite apprehensive about me.

I remember when I was in boarding school, we had a discussion of what college to go to. They wanted me to go to Bryn Mawr, because Bryn Mawr, to them, had a nice reputation. Vassar, for some reason, was never considered, but Smith, where I went, they thought was a very wild place.

It had that reputation at that time, because there was a professor, Harry Elmer Barnes, who had circulated a questionnaire in a sociology class asking students about their sex lives, which in those days was off limits! The New York Times got a copy of it.

Anyway, they didn't like the idea that I was going to Smith, but I wanted to go to Smith because there were fifteen other people from Dobbs headed in that direction. I thought it was probably the most forward-looking, open, stimulating kind of environment.

Chall: Even at that time, you were looking for that?

Gatov: I thought I was looking for it.

High School in Dobbs Ferry

Chall: Before we go into Smith, tell me a little bit about Dobbs. One thing--you left a very close, active family, and went off to school.

Gatov: And loved it. I was very happy. I don't know whether it was because of the age I was--that I was sort of glad to be rid of the brothers--or the thing that I recall most striking me, was a feeling of freedom. There was a great difference in atmosphere at Dobbs, from Miss Gascoigne's, where I'd been, where the students were automatically under suspicion, and you didn't have a warm relationship with the teachers; it was very formal with strict discipline. Because it was a day school, you didn't see the teachers after class.

I got to Dobbs and really thought that I had arrived in heaven, because the teachers were pleasant, the housemothers were cheerful. If you did something wrong, they told you about it, but told you sort of pleasantly. It was not a grim environment, but I'm sure that Dobbs was as strict as most girls' boarding schools were in those days.

I thought that this strict school was a very liberated environment. One of the things that impressed me particularly was American history, which I'd never had. Miss Marguerite Clark was my history teacher, and I found it an absolutely fascinating thing to learn about the American Revolution, and Civil War, and the War of 1812 from the other side! [Laughs] It wasn't the same!

Chall: A great education.

Gatov: I found that there was a tolerance for inquiry. You could ask if you could do a paper on something or other, and probably could, instead of something else that had been assigned. There was, I guess, conformity, but it was nothing like the conformity that I experienced at Miss Gascoigne's.

So, I was very happy, and I don't recall feeling homesick. I don't know why; I'd never been away from home; I'd never been to summer camp, because my parents felt that where we lived in the summertime, we didn't need camp. It was the sense of security, I suppose. I knew who I was. My parents called periodically, and wrote, and came to see

Gatov: me, and on the weekends we were allowed out during the semester, they would take me to New York or take me to Lawrenceville, where my brothers were, to a prom.

When they left there I went to Princeton to see Tom, and later had dates there on my own. I had a fine time.

Chall: That's really interesting. Miss Gascoigne's school, you think was a typical, English-type girls' school?

Gatov: It was the only one I went to, so I don't know that it was typical, but there were others there, a couple of others, that didn't sound any better--or different. They all wore uniforms, and they all, apparently, were staffed with the same kind of teachers.

Chall: They had all been trained in England, so they must have been carrying on some kind of tradition.

Gatov: I'm sure they were. I think, on reflection, they had a good deal of personal unhappiness, because their age would have made them, normally, wives of men that were killed in World War I. We tend to forget how many were lost in that war.

So I think that there was a lot that made these women rather unusually severe, except for Miss Marriott, who was very pretty, and had fluffy hair, and a sense of humor.

Chall: What about the teachers at Dobbs? Were they unmarried women?

Gatov: They were unmarried women, but there was one, Miss Roberts, who taught math, about whom we all had serious suspicions. Miss Roberts lived in New York, in the first place, and commuted, and did not live on campus. And she didn't seem to have an old mother she had to take care of. [Laughs]

Miss Roberts looked as though she'd had a very pleasant weekend when she turned up on Monday! [Laughs] We did a lot of speculating.

Otherwise, they lived on the campus, in the dormitories. They didn't have responsibilities for us, but they were there at mealtimes, for instance, and we would rotate around the dining room; sit at Miss Clark's table one week, then Miss White's, who taught English; Miss Seasholes, who taught Latin, another week; so we got to know the teachers as friends, really.

Chall: It must have been rather confining for the teachers.

Gatov: It must have been dreadful!

Chall: How large is Dobbs Ferry, or was it?

Gatov: At that time, it had about 200 boarders, and 80 or 90 students.

Chall: Were you divided into dorms?

Gatov: Yes, some had been private homes that were remodeled into dormitories, and there was one that had been part of an estate, and had a great deal of beautiful land around it; and then some that had been built as dormitories about 1910. Pretty ugly on the outside, but they functioned.

It was not an elaborate place, the furnishings and so forth were simple. The money was spent on the academic buildings, on the library, and study hall, classrooms, and assembly hall. Obviously, there had been some fund raising done, there were stained-glass windows in the assembly hall in memory of the various people who'd contributed.

And there was a great deal of what was then called "school spirit." Morale was very high, and I felt a tremendous interest in the place and identification with it. I was successful there. As I've said, I was fairly athletic, and I went out for hockey, and basketball, and baseball. I was on the athletic association and on the student council. I was president of the student body and president of the Glee club.

There were lots of things going on. We had a good deal of private time, and as I recall, the library was a very good library. I don't know if it actually was. It seemed to me that it had a lot in it. They were pretty generous with the use of it--you could check books out just as you would out of a public library. They had a lot of non-academic, non-textbook kind of things. There were concerts, and speakers.

There was a good deal of conscious effort made to bring social concerns into the school.

Chall: Who was the head of it?

Gatov: Miss Evelyn Pierce was the headmistress when I was there. She immediately succeeded Miss Masters, who was the founder.

[end Tape 1, side 1, begin Tape 1, side 2]

Gatov: Miss Masters, whom I never knew, died before I got there.

Chall: So it was a relatively young school?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: You say they made a conscious effort to bring the social concerns into the school?

Gatov: Yes, we had speakers. I'm trying to think of some that impressed me particularly, but their names escape me. I remember somebody who was the head of the Foreign Policy Association, a tall, rangy, red-headed man who came back year after year.

Of course, New York had all these people. I guess for a small stipend, they could get them out for dinner and a lecture.

Chall: But they didn't have to. These were young girls in high school, so there must have been some reason.

Gatov: They, I think, had a feeling that first of all, most of us, by far the majority, were going to college. They didn't put up much with the "finishing school" idea, which was still extant, and they made it pretty plain that they were not a finishing school. If you wanted that, you went someplace else.

So you had to be serious-minded about getting to college. This was what they felt they thrived on, their record of getting people in. Every year, at the end of the regular academic year, starting in the sophomore year, we had three weeks of continuation school, as it was called, which was nothing but the taking of old College Board exams, and cramming.

By the time you got to the real college board--they didn't seem too difficult. You could take them every year, or you could take the comprehensives at the end. The era I was in, we did all of them. We took the College Boards every year, and then we took the comprehensives at the end.

Chall: You were prepared!

Gatov: Yes, we were. So I think it was no accident that fifteen of us went to Smith. I don't remember how many went other places, but most went to college. Some went to Sarah Lawrence, which was beginning in those days, the rest went to Vassar, Wellesley, Radcliffe. Some to Bryn Mawr.

Chall: What subjects, then, did you have?

Gatov: In school?

Chall: Yes. At Dobbs.

Gatov: I had four years of Latin, from Miss Seasholes, who is now retired and living in Washington. I still correspond with her. Wonderful woman. I had more than the regular amount of math, because I was very stupid. It took me two years to do the first year of algebra, and two years to do the second year of algebra.

Chall: At least they let you do it.

Gatov: And then I had geometry on top of that in my senior year, so they started me right out tutoring in geometry, because it was obviously going to be necessary! [Laughs] Well, geometry just didn't make any sense to me in those days. [Laughs]

Chall: Does it now?

Gatov: Yes, I do much better with it, thank you. [Laughs] I had to teach it later on. You learn that way.

History I loved. Partly, undoubtedly, because of the personality of the teacher, Miss Clark, who was never too busy. She was so pleased to find somebody so interested in something. They all were interested. And Miss White, who was our English teacher, was a disciplinarian, and had no tolerance for sloppy handwriting, poor spelling, sloping margins, or inaccuracies. [Laughs]

Chall: I would think that you had already been trained not to have any of those anyway!

Gatov: Well, she was quite a remarkable woman. And I took French.

Chall: A couple of years?

Gatov: Four years. And we always had to take Bible every year. Bible history was the course. We had to go to church every Sunday, but you could go to any church you pleased, in the village. There was a good deal of religious orientation. We had prayers every morning, and hymns, and then we had a hymn session every Sunday afternoon or early evening. And we had religious discussion groups called the Tens. I don't know why they were called that.

I was head of the Sincere Ten, I remember, which was a group of perhaps twelve, and we'd meet in one of the classrooms after the evening service, and talk about some phase of the Bible, or something to do with religion.

Chall: Do you think this school had been started--

Gatov: I think they all were rather religious in those days. I think customarily, that the people who founded those schools came out of churches.

Chall: Were the girls primarily Protestant?

Gatov: Oh, my, yes. Protestant and Anglo-Saxon. I can't recall any Jewish girls. There may have been some; I'm sure there probably were, but I wasn't aware of it, and nobody of any other origin that I can recall.

Chall: No Catholics?

Gatov: No, no Catholics that I can recall, but then I'm sure there were some. They probably went off quietly in the morning to Mass, and were back by breakfast, or something. We didn't notice them. There was no special care for them. There was no Catholic Ten, this group I was speaking of. It was presumed that everybody was an Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

Chall: So the expectations were that you would go to college, but beyond that they had no expectations of what the girls were going to do with their lives besides being educated?

Gatov: Well, Mother, I shouldn't say urged me, but she made it plain that she wouldn't mind a bit if I decided to "come out," and make a debut in Montreal. People still did that. [Laughs]

However, as they explored the matter and went into what it would involve, it would have meant not going to college the following year.

Chall: Because of the money; it would have taken so much money?

Gatov: No, it wasn't the money. It was simply that if you were a debutante in Montreal in those days, you were supposed to do certain things. There were parties strung along all through the season, and you went to parties. In Montreal, most girls didn't go to college.

And apparently, you had to make some kind of a commitment. This was at a point when some people were deciding that they'd rather go to college than be a debutante, so the people who put on the coming-out parties selected the debutantes from a list, or whatever procedure it was, and they wanted to extract a promise, about a year in advance, that you would be there.

We talked it over. There was no pressure. I mean, Mother didn't mind. I just said, well, I thought I'd rather go to college. By the time we disposed of the debutante part, they didn't really care. They were spending a lot of time in Pinehurst.

Chall: Then somewhat against your family's best judgment, you decided to go to Smith, and they allowed you to do so.

Gatov: Yes. They didn't buck me: But just why did I want to go to Smith? I suppose because it sounded interesting, and a lot of my friends were going.

You asked me something a minute ago about what were their expectations. I can't imagine. It was never discussed. I was, of course, going to get married. Looking back, and from events subsequent to that, I realize that that was exactly what they had in mind. It was what girls did. They went to college, spent four years in useful academic pursuit, and then came out, or home, rather, and met someone and got married.

It was kind of fuzzy; we didn't discuss it. I didn't discuss it. Though, I realize that after I got to college, I began thinking in terms of working, because friends of mine who were ahead of me, were thinking in terms of working.

I had a clear impression that my father did not approve, that he would consider it a reflection on his ability to support me, if I were to work.

Chall: So it was just expected that you would do whatever seemed to be the norm in those days?

Gatov: Yes, and the norm was to get married.

Chall: And to have a family and stay at home?

Gatov: Yes, to come home, and presumably live at the level of our parents-- maybe not quite, but certainly it was never expected that you'd learn to clean toilets, or scrub bathroom floors, [laughs] or boil diapers.

Because, you see, I went to college in 1929, and up to that point, that September, nobody had given the future much of a thought. It was just going to go right on being like the present.

Chall: And then in 1929 came the Depression.

Gatov: The Crash, yes.

Chall: You stayed at Smith two years, and I imagine you got married.

Gatov: I got married the middle of my junior year.

Smith College

Chall: I see. Tell me about Smith.

Gatov: Smith I loved and had a marvelous time at. First of all, I went with friends. This little clutch of us that went from Dobbs; we didn't particularly stick together after we got there. Smith was trying an experiment. They decided that they'd admit the biggest freshman class they'd ever admitted, with the idea that they'd weed them out heavily at the end of the freshman year.

Well, other factors weeded them out. [Laughs] They dropped out very fast because of the economic effects of the stock market on their families. Canada, interestingly enough, didn't really feel the Depression for a couple of years more. Eventually it did, and of course, it hit brokerage firms and things like that immediately.

But, really, the unemployment that was so devastating here--by 1931--was really very severe. It was not that severe, at that time, in Canada. So there was no problem about my staying on.

By this time, I'd gotten to know some boys, through my brothers, and some on my own, and I remember very well the first day I was at Smith, my boyfriend from Yale, Lincoln Stoddard from Worcester, arrived in his car and said, "Now, I'm going to show you all the back roads in Northampton." [Laughs]

We had a rule that you couldn't drive in a car after dark, or be in a car after dark, and you had to be in your house by ten o'clock. This was a complicating factor [laughs], because we had campuses of boys' colleges all around us. Williams was about seventy miles away, and Harvard was a hundred. Amherst was eight, and Yale, I think, was seventy. This was in the days of the rumble seat, of the Model A Ford, and all the boys I knew had cars.

They were mostly in these colleges, and would come around. Lincoln showed me how to get into Northampton without being observed by anybody [laughs], and what the nearest place was to get out for my particular dormitory unseen.

I thought that everybody had a very good time who was there, because I had a very good time. I went away on the weekends that we were allowed to. I forget what those restrictions were, but you couldn't have two in a row away, or something like that.

Chall: Certainly more than you had at Dobbs, though?

Gatov: Oh, much more.

Chall: The Dobbs restrictions, like going away once a semester, was that all through high school?

Gatov: Oh, yes.

Chall: I see. So you really were restricted.

Gatov: It was when I got to college that I realized--probably dimly, but I became aware that I was lucky to have had older brothers. Some of my friends that I went to Dobbs with, really went kind of nuts after they got to Smith, because the freedom was such that they really couldn't handle it, after the restrictions.

Boys were a strange breed, unknown and fascinating. They were just discovering them, where I'd lived with them all my life. I think I was very lucky in that regard. They were involved in sexual experimentations with men that I knew enough not to, not because of my parents, but because of my brothers. It was no moral thing, but a plain fear of getting pregnant.

One of the girls that I knew there did get pregnant, and we tried to find a doctor to do an abortion, but couldn't. She turned up drowned in a lake on the campus.

Chall: Oh, my goodness! What an experience.

Gatov: It was. It made an enormous impression on us, and is one of the reasons I've spent so much time working in Planned Parenthood to have abortions made legal and available.

For lots of reasons, I think I just enjoyed being there. I didn't realize it then, that there were a lot of girls at Smith, as there are probably at any girls' college, who had a miserable time, who came there not knowing any boys, and had no way to meet any. Though there were dances and so forth at college.

I don't know how to express it except by saying that when I later got to the University of Michigan--four years later--I saw the same kinds of girls we had at Smith who never went anywhere: the plain ones, those who didn't have much money, perhaps who were working, waiting on tables, things like this, in some of the self-help dormitories. At Michigan however they found boys and they were holding hands in the library and having a wonderful time.

Gatov: They had dates for classes, and it never occurred to me that a coeducational school could be like that! It was a great eye-opener! But as I say, I was still vegetable enough that I wasn't aware that not everybody had as good a time as I did.

I had plenty of money to spend. I was not aware of any particular restrictions or inhibitions from my parents.

Chall: You were outgoing, had an outgoing personality?

Gatov: I guess so. I was president of the class, in my sophomore year, and so I guess that means I got to know some of my classmates. I was intellectually stimulated by an English teacher and by a course in labor history.

I had a near-calamity with a five-hour Spanish course I took. It was taught by the head of the Spanish department, and it was a five-hour double course. I was going to get rid of the two language requirements in one year. I couldn't stand her, nor she me. I failed the mid year because she was proctoring it and because a budding romance had collapsed. So I was put on probation. I had five hours of "E"--failure.

Chall: Failure in Spanish?

Gatov: Failure in Spanish. I went to see her after I got my grades. She said that if it had been anybody else but me, they would have gotten a D in Spanish, but she expected more of me.

I said, "Why? Why me?" She said, "You're going to see the dean. The dean will tell you." Then I went to see the dean, who was a much pleasanter person. The dean told me that on the freshman year I.Q. tests, I had gotten one of the ten highest scores they'd ever had at Smith. Therefore, she couldn't understand why I had written the Spanish exam in French and Latin. I didn't tell the dean about my personal problem nor my inability to get along with Miss Bourland. But I was on probation, and that kept me on campus.

Chall: How long was that?

Gatov: All semester. All of spring semester, from February to May. Well, it happened that another girl in my house was taking a different section of the same course. I lived at 116 Elm Street, which was a small cottage on the main drag in Northampton. It probably had no more than about ten rooms, so I guess there were about twenty people. We had meals next door.

Gatov: The other girl was a young woman from New Haven, whose name was Miriam Botwinick--a tiny Jewish girl, not terribly bright, but we became good friends for some reason--felt terribly sorry for me and my E from Miss Bourland. Her section was with Mr. Zapata. Mr. Zapata didn't teach like Miss Bourland did. Mr. Zapata, who probably disliked Miss Bourland as much as I did, decided that his class was going to do really well.

So he gave his class an outline of what was going to be on the final exam, and among other things, there would be a resumé, to be written in Spanish, of a book that we had been reading. Then some grammar questions and so forth.

Well, it was the resumé that captivated me, so I wrote it in English, translated it into Spanish, and a friend of mine who was a Spanish major looked it over and corrected it. Then I committed it to memory, and had it absolutely verbatim. I went into the final exam, and sure enough, it was as Mr. Zapata had told Miriam it was going to be! So I wrote it in awfully good Spanish, and answered the questions almost perfectly.

Anyway, I was staying for graduation--we had daisy chains in those days--the sophomores carried the daisy chains on their shoulders as the seniors marched to commencement between our two lines. While I was carrying the daisy chain, Miss Bourland came up and put her arm around my waist--she came up about to my shoulder--and said, "I knew all the time you could do A work if you'd just apply yourself!"

So I just said, "Thank you, Miss Bourland," and that was the end of that episode! [Laughs]

Chall: Were you back in Miss Bourland's class during this time.

Gatov: Oh, yes.

Chall: You had to go back into her class and go on with her?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Even though you'd failed the preceding semester?

Gatov: I didn't get thrown out of the class altogether. I was allowed to go on to the second semester. I don't know, really, how it worked. But the net result was that she gave me an A by the end of the year.

Chall: Is that the only Spanish you've ever taken?

Gatov: I've hated Spanish ever since! [Laughs] Even now, I can't do much with it. I try to, when I go to Mexico or places. My husband speaks fluent Spanish.

Chall: That's a help.

Gatov: Yes, it is.

Chall: Was it a change for you, that you can recall, having men teachers?

Gatov: Yes, but they--the fact that they were men didn't particularly impress me. The president was a man--William Allan Neilson. He was a marvelous scholar, and lived in a house right in the middle of the campus. It was very much a center of student activities.

He tried to get to know the students. There were about 2,500 of us at that time, maybe a little more. He was a very short man, with a Van Dyke beard. He'd walk along the main arteries of the campus, say good morning to somebody and pick the books out of her arms and carry them for her, and engage in conversation all the way to wherever it was she was going.

We had compulsory chapel in those days, three days a week. The times you wanted to go were when Dr. Neilson was speaking. He was a very loved figure, who was very frank. I remember him talking about smoking one time. He said it was a "disgusting and expensive habit, to which I am addicted."

Another of his chapel addresses--he was talking about politics, or something like that--public participation. And he felt very strongly about these girls. I remember him saying this more than once, to the effect that "You people are probably the most privileged women in the world, and you're the beneficiaries of maybe the best educational system in the world. I like to think so. I want you to remember that you have a responsibility towards what happens in your country. And if you don't think that you ought to help run it, who do you think should?"

This is the way he would talk. He was challenging, trying to make us realize that there was more to the world out there than perhaps we saw. He knew where we came from--much less than half the student body came from high schools, at that time. Most came from girls' preparatory schools.

So he knew that he had girls from affluent backgrounds, and by this time--we were into the early thirties--changes were occurring. He was a very wise man. I just loved him. He was trying to make us

Gatov: realize that there were going to be changes in the world, and that we'd better be ready for them. We couldn't expect the past to continue.

Chall: And were you--did you become aware of it? Did it jolt you?

Gatov: To the extent of taking, for example, this course in labor history. I don't think I even knew there was a labor union until I took this course. I was ignorant.

Chall: That was probably something that he put into the curriculum.

Gatov: Quite possibly. I remember--I can't remember the name of the professor, unfortunately, but I learned about such things as the Haymarket riots, the Pullman strike, all of these things that nobody ever mentioned before to me, even though I was brought up on the New York Times. My father used to get it in Montreal, driving into the city to pick it up on Sunday.

Dobbs required that we subscribe to it or the Herald Tribune, daily. Everybody had to subscribe to one of the New York papers, you see, and presumably read it, though I don't remember anybody questioning us on that. We did have current events sessions and so on. So I continued the habit of subscribing to the New York Times when I got to Smith, and I read it, but obviously I didn't read those things. It must have been like the sports page--I ignored it. So my world was beginning to open up, I think, by the time I left Smith.

I wouldn't say that I had any serious concerns. I didn't feel any calling to do anything about the problems that people encountered. But I did have friends who were upperclassmen, who were taking jobs at Macy's, since this was the big thing in those days. If you were lucky enough to get into the Macy's training program, you were guaranteed a job as a salesgirl.

Chall: Smith graduates were doing this?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Because they had to?

Gatov: Yes, these were the girls who had to--or wanted to work. I don't know. By this time, enough of them had to or wanted to do something. They were not getting married right away. They wanted to go to New York and work. And they had no practical training in anything.

Gatov: I guess it was not too dissimilar from those who came from small towns in those days. New York was the magnet. The only way they knew to get in--certainly the college didn't, as I recall, offer us any job opportunities--was to find some kind of training after graduation.

You found one on your own. You went to New York and you applied, and if you were accepted, you'd made it! [Laughs]

Chall: What about career opportunities? Of course, it was the Depression, but even so, were the girls encouraged to go into professional careers?

Gatov: Yes, they were. I don't recall any who were going into teaching. I had several friends who went into medicine, and one didn't practice. She didn't stay with it.

Of course, the fact that I didn't stay there to graduate cut me off from what ultimately happened to many of them. So I couldn't really say. Perhaps you're familiar with the Status of Women Report of 1963, which was headed initially by Eleanor Roosevelt. She died, and Mrs. Esther Peterson took it over and presented it to President Kennedy just before the assassination.

It's a fascinating analysis of women up to perhaps 1960. What it showed, that so startled me, was that women from 1945 to 1960, were enrolling in colleges in both smaller percentages and number, graduating in smaller percentages and number, and going to graduate school in smaller percentages and number than they were in the thirties.

It came as a great surprise to me. It sort of triggered my thinking that something different had occurred. Perhaps it was the stimulus of the Depression. I don't know. But certainly, we were less, it seemed to me, we were less conventional in our expectations, perhaps, than some of the women who came along after World War II.

Chall: And you felt this in the girls that you knew who were ahead of you?

Gatov: Yes. They were planning on doing things on their own. They were not planning to go home.

Chall: I see. And they weren't planning on getting married right away?

Gatov: No. Some of them did. Some of them left college and got married, but this was not their be-all and end-all.

Chall: What were you majoring in, or had you planned?

Gatov: It was history.

Chall: American history?

Gatov: It was just sort of loosely history. All I had taken up to that point was philosophy, which I thought was unbearably dull, and a world history course, which I thought was awful. Later, I realized that it never mentioned either China or Japan. It shouldn't have been called world history. It was western world history.

▼ I was excused from freshman English and a couple of other things, among the required courses. My college board scores amazed me--even in geometry. They were very good. I was surprised, and pleased, and Smith was my first choice. And I liked the place.

Chall: So it was a good two years?

Gatov: Oh, very fine, a very fine experience, with the exception of Miss Bourland and the Spanish! [Laughs]

Chall: Do you look back on that as a sort of growing period?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Growing socially as well as intellectually?

Gatov: Yes, in a very sheltered environment. Because it was a sheltered environment.

Chall: Despite its liberal reputation?

Gatov: Despite its liberal reputation, it wasn't all that liberal. We had a lot of fun. One of the things I noticed about being in a girls' college, later observing the coeds at Michigan, was that during the week we had a feeling of total relaxation. We went around in dirty old Brooks sweaters, and filthy saddle shoes, and disgusting tweed skirts, caring not at all about how we looked.

Then, come weekends, of course everybody blossomed out! [Laughs] I don't know that this was beneficial or otherwise, but it was comfortable. Strictly comfortable. We had no time periods of self-consciousness. We didn't worry about Bill over there, who I have a date with later. Perhaps he'd think we were a nut if we said something? I don't know if this is the way coeds feel. I realized that this was missing. It was not there; there was a lack of pressure--of that particular kind of pressure.

Chall: And you could be just as smart as you wanted to be?

Gatov: Yes; as you were expected to be. I really felt no feeling that you should suppress your inquiry, that there were courses that you shouldn't take beyond the required courses, which were not very exciting.

Mary Ellen Chase was there at that time. She was my freshman adviser. Well, I didn't have a great deal to do with her, because outside of the very apparent problems with Miss Bourland, I really didn't feel the need for an adviser. I knew pretty much what courses I wanted to take. So I knew her socially, but I didn't really have a "client" relationship with her.

It was an environment that was familiar to me. It was in the Northeast. It was a beautiful campus, sort of architecturally bare. We knew that the boys' schools got all the money. Dr. Neilson told us. The husbands always took care of their colleges first. He hoped that we would remember that. [Laughs]

The Morrow family was very interested in Smith. Mrs. Morrow was one of the trustees.

Chall: Anne Morrow's [Lindbergh] mother?

Gatov: Yes. I wouldn't say that there was a feminist feeling, but I developed, at least, an awareness that I was expected to pull my weight, take my place, do my part. I developed some sort of a sense of social responsibility, that was beginning at Dobbs, but certainly got reinforced very hard at Smith.

Wealth was not considered anything to be particularly proud of. Accomplishment was.

Chall: When you went back to Montreal for summers--I assume you took off, and went back home? Did you discuss what you were learning with your brothers?

Gatov: Well, my oldest brother, I remember--I guess I was serious-minded, and probably more serious than I am today--and they [my brothers] complained about it. How could I expect any boys to be interested in me when I was--well, the term they use today is "heavy."?

I kept wanting to talk about all these things that were of no interest to them at all.

Chall: Certainly no other man would care.

Gatov: Absolutely not! But, on the other hand, I didn't feel that I was ostracized in any way. I wasn't. I was one of the lucky ones, I think, having the best of both worlds. I had lots of beaux, as we called them then, and one who was the one I was very serious about, and finally wanted to marry.

He was from Hartford, and a member of a very prominent family.

Chall: Where was he going to school?

Gatov: He had just graduated from Trinity. He went to Yale and got thrown out for some reason or other, and went to Trinity, which is in Hartford. And he was working in what had been his father's insurance business. His father was dead. I used to go to Hartford a lot to spend the weekend with him and his mother. She was just a darling person who could imagine no evil about her son who was not only attractive-looking, but had white hair, which sort of made him doubly attractive.

They lived in a large, comfortable house in West Hartford, as I recall, and what had been the coachhouse was the garage, and the man who had been the coachman was now the gardener, and he lived upstairs. We used to go to dances at the Hartford Country Club a lot, and after the first couple of dances my friend would just disappear. I didn't mind, particularly, I was having a perfectly good time.

When the thing was all over, about two o'clock, he would be helped into the car by his friends, drunk as could be, and I would drive back, drive the car down into the garage, and the coachman would come downstairs and just take over. I got out of the car and went in the house and went to bed.

The next morning, I would come down to breakfast, and his mother would say, "Oh, poor boy, he's not feeling well today, but he'll be along a little later."

Chall: Did she have any idea what was the matter with him?

Gatov: Apparently not. I think she couldn't quite acknowledge it.

Chall: And you were seriously interested in him?

Gatov: Tremendously. Oh, I thought he was just heavenly. So we got more or less engaged, and then he told me that it was a loose commitment, half a commitment. And I knew enough to know, even if it was not acknowledged to myself, that I really couldn't fit the family pattern in Hartford.

Gatov: The subject came up, so that it was pretty clear that if we ever married, we were going to leave Hartford. Then somebody-- Standard Oil offered him a job in the Philippines, which would take two years. I said, "Fine. If you do that, we'll get married." Then the family pressure on him began. He decided that he didn't want to go to the Philippines, that he wanted to stay in the insurance business.

I was broken-hearted (that was the episode which upset me during the Spanish mid-year), but I have since realized how lucky I was. That was just over.

Then I began to meet some men from various graduate schools at Harvard. I might want to go into this later, in the next interview, but that's how I met Don McGill, who was my first husband.

Chall: I think we can go into this, but I did want to check back on some details first. You said your family thought you were a little "heavy," for a girl who was ultimately supposed to find a man who was interested in her. Did you argue over social problems?

Gatov: Well, I kept bringing them up! [Laughs] And ask, "What do you think about it?"

Chall: And what did they think about it?

Gatov: "Oh, shut up!" or, "I don't think anything about it." I became aware in this period, somehow, of things that would be later called discrimination. I suppose it was just plain snobbishness in those days. But because the French spoke French and were Catholic and had very different kinds of education--mostly church-oriented education--and were obviously never going to amount to anything in the business world, a two-level situation really existed.

The city of Montreal was over eighty percent French, and so, of course, the French ran the politics of the province, totally. And the English had all the money. It wasn't until after World War II that this began to change. The French were definitely second-class citizens. There was no question about it. It showed in such little ways. You learned Parisian French in the schools, and it was made very plain that French-Canadian French was an abomination. You certainly didn't want to corrupt your pure French French with this patois.

So the French were supposed to speak English to the English. The English never spoke French to the French--except for my godmother. She came from a place called Bicque, a little town down by the St. Lawrence River, and she spoke perfect, flawless, French-Canadian French.

Gatov: A marvelous sense of humor--she was a great, great, woman. I just adored her. She and my mother were very close friends. Whenever they got out in the country, where nobody spoke English, or in any kind of situation, Aunt Ethel, as I used to call her, could speak French! [Laughs]

Mother never learned a word of French, in all the years she lived there. No kind of French. She just ignored the whole thing!

Chall: Did you have French at The Study?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: And then you had four years at Dobbs. You should know it quite well.

Gatov: You would think so, but with disuse, it certainly does disappear.

And I also was aware that there was something wrong with Jews, and "niggers," as black people were called, and Catholics.

Chall: They called them that in Canada?

Gatov: That was their name there. They had a very small population of Negroes there. No more than thirty-five Pullman porters who lived there. They had no part of anything. Nor did the Chinese, who did the laundry and were all called "John." I'm sure that there was a Jewish population in Montreal, but I wasn't aware of it, since they weren't where I was. I didn't meet them skiing or in school. I don't know the answer to that; obviously, there must have been a Jewish community.

Chall: I can assure you there was; my mother grew up in Montreal.

Gatov: Did she?

Chall: In a very much Jewish community!

Gatov: Obviously there was--is she alive?

Chall: Yes.

Gatov: Well, she can confirm it. I'd like to hear her opinion of all this I've been giving you.

It was a small, segregated world, but I wasn't aware that it was small and segregated. I guess that's the only way I can describe it. I didn't rebel against it; I just didn't think anything of it until, as I say, the stirrings began, at Smith, when I became aware that there

Gatov: were people to whom society was very punitive--harsh, and of course, I then began meeting Catholic and Jewish girls and could make my own observations.

This Miriam Botwinick, who saved my life out of the kindness of her heart! So I can see, now, that I was gradually moving away from the preconceptions that my family had, and that my two older brothers still do, which in some way has affected our relationship; we sort of tolerate each other in such matters. They're practically Birchers. [Laughs]

Chall: Well, a liberal education will do that for a girl. [Laughs]

Gatov: I remember when I was appointed treasurer [of the United States], some newspaper found my mother, at Pinehurst, and Mother said something to the effect that the whole family were Republicans. The reporter asked, "How do you account for your daughter?" and Mother said, "Well, I guess that something happened to her at Smith!" [Laughs]

Chall: That's a good answer.

Gatov: For that question, at any rate. I can't answer it; I don't suppose anybody really can pinpoint change. There was no single occurrence, I can see now. But it was starting. The fact that I even took a course in labor history, which was certainly not required at that stage.

Dr. Neilson, I presume, was applying the prod.

Chall: Well, it would be interesting to know if Smith girls reacted differently to their social environments when they were through with college than did girls from other girls' schools.

Gatov: The ones that I knew did, because we were friends; it probably meant that we had something in common anyway. One of them went on to become a newspaper reporter, and then correspondent for North American News Service. One was in the State Department. Miriam Fosdick, one of my classmates, is now quite a power with one of the Senate committees. I forget which one.

I can see that something drew us all together, and that was not verbalized, I'm sure. Some sort of community of interests. I think that Smith in those days had the reputation of being more "advanced."

Chall: Well, you left in the middle of your junior year to get married?

Gatov: Yes. I attended a wedding outside of New York in June at the end of my sophomore year. I was part of the wedding party. One of the ushers was a man named Don McGill from Chicago, who was at Harvard getting a master's in history. He was about twenty-six, I guess.

[end Tape 1, side 2]

Introspection: How the Past is Prologue

[Recorded by Mrs. Gatov after completion of the first interview as she drove back to her home in Kentfield. Tape A]

Gatov: The first thing that I want to get in goes back to my freshman year in college. I began trying to write. I remember taking a course in creative writing, another one in music appreciation, and I was beginning to enjoy trying to express original--I hoped they were original, at any rate--ideas.

My desk was in the corner of a window--sort of a bow window--and I used to love to look out of it in the early evening after supper, and think about what the future was going to be like, and what I was going to be like, in a very, very generalized way. I remember writing some poetry at the time. If I can find any of it, I'll bring it over. It probably would express, better than these words can, what I was after.

It seems to me that my objective then was to no longer be confined to a narrow strata of society, even though it was a very comfortable and pleasant level at which I found myself. I realize now, on more thought, that I was aware there were all kinds of people in the world, and I wanted to be able to communicate with them, and have them communicate with me, to use the vernacular of today.

I wanted to be acceptable to all kinds of people. I don't know whether this was Dr. Neilson, or whether it was a religious training of earlier years. I don't remember going to church at all while I was at Smith, and I don't recall the chapel services had very much of a religious connotation. Ethical, perhaps. But I began to develop the feeling that everybody who is human is entitled to respect for that very fact.

I think also a little of this comes from my really delighted acceptance of American history and the American constitution. To go back even further, when I was in Dobbs--you remember I said I'd come from Montreal and never had any American history. I'd had a lot of Canadian history, and a great deal of English history. Canada was governed under something called the North America Act, which was passed in 1867, I believe, and it created a dominion. It created one country, and brought the provinces together, and they all acknowledged that they were part of the British Empire, in a commonwealth status.

But it was not a statement of principles. It was nothing like what I got so excited about reading in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. I took the whole thing pretty literally. These

Gatov: people, about whom I began to learn a little something--the drafters of the Constitution--they were people of property; they certainly were as privileged as I was, and yet they had these marvelous conceptions of people having equal rights.

I realized that the concept of everybody equal under the law didn't mean that everybody was equal in the sense that the same was expected of you as was expected of me, as was expected of my brother. I don't think that I was ever that naive; but it was the concept that because you were an American citizen, this very fact guaranteed you certain rights in the community of humans, in the world of man.

I found this a terribly heady thing, and I just loved it. So I think that this was the start of my feeling that I must know more kinds of people, and break out of my mold. Not that it was stifling in any way. Nobody was holding me back, but I realized that these were ideas that I'd never had before, and my family might accept or not. It seemed not to worry me at all that they might disapprove.

Now as I recall, the word that I used to describe what I wanted to be was "cosmopolitan," which meant, in my vocabulary of the day, an ability to touch and to understand the ways of living, problems, aspirations, and the customs of all kinds of people.

Then there's another little bit that may illuminate something about my mother and me. This was about the weekend before my final set of College Boards, and my oldest brother was about to graduate from Princeton. I wanted to go, and my parents wanted me to go, but the school had a rule that you couldn't be absent on the weekend before College Boards began, the reason being that you had to be in good shape and get lots of sleep, and be ready to do as well as you could on the exams.

Well, my parents had no patience with this, frankly, so they called the headmistress and told her that they wanted me taken to the station to get on such-and-such a train to New York, and they would meet me, and we would go down to Princeton for the weekend. Miss Pierce (the headmistress) and Mother had quite a little argument.

Mother told me about it later. Miss Pierce said she didn't think that this was the proper attitude for my parents to take, on the weekend before the most crucial days in my life. My mother said that she replied to her, "Well, Miss Pierce, I think I'm at least as interested in Elizabeth's future as you are, and I think it would do her good." So I went.



Gatov: And there was another episode before I went to Dobbs. Something had occurred, and I've lost any recollection of what it was, when I was at The Study, Miss Gascoigne's school. Some sort of infraction of the rules, and Miss Gascoigne called my mother in. I think I was in bed with a bad case of poison ivy at the time.

Anyway, my mother was called in to talk to Miss Gascoigne. The school apparently blamed me for whatever it was that had been done, and told Mother that I was a disturbing influence in the school, and she doubted very much if I could really matriculate, as they called it, from Miss Gascoigne's. She didn't really throw me out, according to Mother, but she made it pretty plain that she wanted some changes in my attitude, if I was thinking of coming back in September.

I'd been there six years. I don't know why I was presumed the culprit, but I was. Mother reacted by saying that well, she wasn't so sure that she wanted me to come back. Actually, I was planning to go to boarding school although it wasn't necessarily going to be that September.

So the result was that I never went back. I got over the poison ivy and stayed out of school that summer. September saw me at Dobbs, and that chapter was closed.

With all our differences that we may have had, and I'm sure we had many, Mother was always on my side. I don't think I ever had any question about that. My parents and me against the world.

I do remember that I felt that my father understood me better than my mother. He had more of a sense of humor than my mother did, which appealed to me enormously. I'm not very funny myself, but I like people who are funny.

Something else that ought to be included someplace, which may explain some of my later life, was that my father and my brothers took an automatic and instant dislike to any young man that I brought home on my own. If he was a son of a friend of my parents, it was fine, or if he was a friend of one of my brothers, it was probably all right.

But it was made very clear to me that I was special in this regard. They wouldn't--and never would--think that any man was quite good enough for their little darling. They also had some ground rules. My father would normally serve cocktails to anybody who was sixteen or older; this was just part of family routine. When I became sixteen, I would have one of the cocktails that Mother made.

Gatov: They were hideous concoctions of gin, lemon juice, white of egg, pineapple juice, and a little bit of apricot brandy. They were known as Mother's Cocktails. I thought they were delicious. This, of course, was during Prohibition in the United States, but we had no Prohibition in Canada. My parents took the rather enlightened attitude that children were going to be exposed to drinking, sooner or later, someplace, under certain circumstances, away from home. They might be protected a bit by learning something about it by drinking at home.

All of his life, my father didn't drink Mother's cocktails. He had a scotch and soda, which he taught me to mix for him. He had two drinks before dinner and one at ten o'clock at night before he went to bed. It was just as conventional as it could be. Everyone was allowed two cocktails before dinner.

But my father made it very well known to me that any young man who took more than two was obviously a drunk and a worthless character. So I used to warn the boys who came up to visit us in the summertime or for the weekend, at Pinehurst or wherever, that whatever they did other times I didn't care about. "Please don't take the third cocktail that will be offered to you. It is a test. It makes life a lot easier to just say, 'Thank you very much, but no.'" Usually they did.

This exposure to alcohol I really feel was a very sound idea. I think that by removing the mystery, it helped a lot. This is not to say that I never had too much to drink--I certainly did. But during Prohibition days [when I was in the United States], I remember tasting the awful stuff that people were drinking, and thinking "Heavens, how can they swallow it?" I was learning how it was made, and so forth, so that in those days I drank ginger ale, because the bootleg stuff was so awful. I had had good liquor, so I knew what it was.

When we were at Pinehurst, my mother used to smuggle Scotch across the border for my father. He bought corn liquor, which he would age and treat with great respect, from a bootlegger. By the time he served it--it was bourbon. So I've never had any of the poor and inferior stuff, and really wasn't very interested in drinking, or in the effect of it. I didn't drink very much during Prohibition. It wasn't something I did. It wasn't that I wasn't with plenty of people who did.

I have a little story that you might be interested in from when I was in boarding school. I went to Chicago during the summer, to visit a friend of mine who later enrolled at Smith. She lived in

Gatov: Winnetka. Her name was Jean Armstrong, and her father was president of the Monarch Food Company. It was a food canning plant, I guess, in Chicago.

I arrived on the Fourth of July, which was of no significance to me whatsoever, as the Canadian national holiday was the first of July. I'd taken the train from Montreal, and after a day and a half, arrived in Chicago. The Armstrongs met me, and we drove out to Winnetka. Well, getting to the station from Winnetka, you drive through a lot of downtown Chicago.

I could hear these bangs and pops and so forth. This was in the days of Al Capone, and I was absolutely certain that here I was in the gangster center of the country, and here were all the gangsters shooting at each other and nobody cared! Nobody paid the slightest attention. Fortunately, I had sense enough not to say anything, and nobody else seemed disturbed.

I later learned that this was the great American custom of the Fourth of July.

Probably I should also say something about what it was like to be a Canadian in the United States in those days. Even less than today, Americans knew nothing about Canada. It was the great frozen North, it was full of Indians and polar bears, and probably a pretty primitive people.

So to make things more interesting, I remember inventing an Indian grandmother. I said that one of my grandmothers was French; since I didn't know my grandmothers, it didn't seem like running anybody down. One of my grandmothers, or great-grandmothers, definitely was French, and I decided that the other was an Indian, an Iroquois, the tribe that was prevalent around Montreal.

For years, I just let this little myth prevail at Dobbs, and it made me much more interesting.

Another thing that I quickly recognized was that people of this particular strata in the United States "find out" about each other. It was very difficult for them to find out much about me, so I was pretty well accepted. I went to a lot of other girls' coming-out parties, and I never heard of anyone saying, "Well, I'm not so sure that we should have her." But they said this about other people, I was aware.

So I would say that being a Canadian in the United States at that time was by no means a handicap, and probably was quite an asset.

Gatov: All this time, I was becoming more and more and more an American, I began to realize. Particularly, I was also a Democrat. I don't know by what process I got there, but I recall the Al Smith-Herbert Hoover election of 1928. We had a mock election at school, and a parade. I was one of six Democrats marching for Al Smith, and everybody else was marching for Hoover. That taught me something, too, about the probable politics of my friends' families.

I'll remember to bring over the Dobbs yearbooks, with all the pictures, so Mrs. Chall can see how deadly earnest we were.

One more bit of clarification--I was telling you the problems I had with the Spanish teacher and the five hours of "E" on the mid-year exam. I recall now very clearly what happened. It was partly my problems with Miss Bourland and the fact that I went to pieces when I saw her proctoring an exam.

But also my romance with my hoped-for future husband in Hartford, fell apart at just that time. As I mentioned, I was pretty upset, because I realized that I was extremely attracted to him, and in spite of his getting drunk regularly at parties at the country club, he had many things to commend him. We had a lot of mutual interests, and I thought he was just a delightful person.

As I said, the decision not to go to the Philippines with Standard Oil had come just prior to the final, so I called it off and was in a state of emotional despair, so that was certainly a contributing factor to my miserable performance on the exam.

For some reason, I saw fit not to tell Miss Bourland about this. I suspect I thought that she disliked me enough anyway. She thought that I was too active socially and enjoyed life on and off campus. I thought she resented me and that this would only make matters worse.

[end Tape A]

II A DECADE OF ADJUSTMENTS, 1932-1945
 (Interview 2, November 26, 1975)
 [begin Tape 2, side 1]

Marriage: Intellectual Life in Storm King, New York

Chall: I recall that we were talking about how you happened to meet your husband, in about 1930, I guess it was. At a wedding?

Gatov: Yes. He was studying for a doctor's degree--I think I said it was a master's--but he'd actually gotten his mater's at the University of Michigan earlier. He was working on his doctorate at Harvard.

Chall: What field?

Gatov: In history. Modern European history. And he was about the first person that I had met who was not out of the business world, and who had concern about some of these things which interested me, too. After the wedding, he came up and visited us, at our summer place outside of Montreal.

The family seemed to like him, and I realized that I was getting much more involved than I had been originally. I went back to college, and about Thanksgiving time, we decided that we wanted to get married. We made this known to his parents and my parents, and they were both horrified because the Depression was on, and he had no job, and I was in college, and for all of the reasons that they could possibly imagine.

So they suggested that we wait for three years. That seemed ridiculous to us, so we took matters in our own hands, and eloped, which caused something of a crisis all around. We were married by a Justice of the Peace in Petersburg, New York on December 17, 1931.

Anyhow, he shortly thereafter got a job teaching in a boys' school called Storm King in Cornwall, New York. I don't know whether it's even still in existence.

Chall: Where was that?

Gatov: On Storm King Mountain, which is just north of West Point, on the Hudson River. Perfectly beautiful spot.

Chall: What did you do?

Gatov: I didn't go back to school after Christmas.

Chall: You went to live at Harvard?

Gatov: No, then we began job-hunting, began driving all over, going to schools, boys' schools mostly. He finally found a job, as I say, at Storm King, so there we settled in.

Chall: What did he plan to do about his graduate work?

Gatov: Nothing much, at that time. I don't know whether he was getting bored with it, or what, but after we stayed there three years, during the course of which my oldest child was born, Jane, in 1934, he decided that he wanted to go to the University of Michigan, law school. He didn't want to be in teaching.

While we were living at Storm King, I met a Mr. and Mrs. Louis Ledoux of New York. He had been to Japan many times, and was president of the Japan Society, as it was then called. He had a remarkable collection of Noh robes, some Japanese prints, and some ceramics, but not very much. They had a weekend place very near the school, on Storm King Mountain, and they were very nice to us and invited us over a great deal.

He was the first person that I had met who really had an intimate knowledge of any Far Eastern country. I remember, one day, saying to him, "You know, you're so interested in Japan, so informed--you really ought to be our ambassador." He looked horrified, and he said, "I could never do that, I'm much too fond of the Japanese!"

I didn't understand what he meant then. I know now. But it seemed to me sort of sensible that somebody who had empathy with the people that they were being sent to would want to do a better job. That was my first introduction to the Far East.

So we went to the University of Michigan.

Chall: I'll have to stop you for a minute. I don't have your husband's name.

Gatov: His name was Donald Hamilton McGill. He came from Wilmette, Illinois. It's a suburb between Chicago and Winnetka. He attended New Trier High School, and the University of Michigan as an undergraduate, and a graduate student, and then went to Harvard.

Chall: I see. Did you say that you lived in Storm King for three years?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: And he taught there three years?

Gatov: He taught there for three years.

Chall: And your daughter Jane was born--

Gatov: In 1934. She was one when we went to Ann Arbor.

Chall: So he decided to go back to graduate school, but in another field?

Gatov: He went to law school.

Chall: Could you tell me what you were doing during that period in Storm King?

Gatov: Well, after the baby was born, I was doing quite a lot, because this was in the days before laundromats and things. I was boiling diapers, and mixing formulas, and all those things. [Laughs] Much simpler today than they were then!

But before she was born, we shared this great interest in history, and I was particularly aware of the gaps that I had in my education. We used to go to New York, down to the lower end of Fourth Avenue, where there were many, many second-hand book stores. He had quite a library; about 3,000 books at that time, and it continued to grow.

I decided that I knew nothing about Russia, which was another area that had never been mentioned much during my schooling. So I bought a lot of second-hand books on the Tsarist regime, and the Russian Revolution, and what happened after the revolution.

I was so aware of my ignorance. I had started this project not having the faintest idea why the Russian Revolution occurred, or that everybody else's revolutions had happened earlier--what was the matter with them? I had no idea how separated they were from the rest of Europe, and what their own internal problems had been. In any case, I found it very interesting, and sort of entertained myself that way.

Gatov: There was also a very interesting English couple. The husband was on the faculty, named Leavitt. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Leavitt. Elsie, I think, was her name. She and he broadened my knowledge enormously of things that were going on in Europe. In other words, what was leading up to Hitler, who came in at just this time, in 1933.

I remember so well listening on the radio with them, to Hitler addressing the stadium full of people in Nuremberg, I believe it was; prior to that, the overthrow of the previous chancellor. I became aware of the development of the Nazi movement, with a great deal of help from the Leavitts, who were much more informed than I. We used to listen to a lot of those things, and talk about them. I think this was when I realized that the United States was going to be involved in whatever happened. That even then, the world had shrunk to the point that probably all these things were very important to us. I guess that's the best way of putting it.

I remember the rise of Mussolini, and the calm with which people took that. There was no concern, apparently, that I was aware of, that these dictatorships were rising. Fascist states were there to stay. I remember the Spanish civil war.

The attitudes of people then was really rather of indifference, even in the pretty intellectual group that I was in at that time. People like the Ledouxes weren't the only ones who lived in Cornwall in the summertime and weekends that we come to know. It was a very interesting community.

Return to College: University of Michigan

Gatov: Anyhow, we went from there to Ann Arbor, Michigan. Soon after we got there, we went on a picnic, where the head of the geography department was present. Don had a lot of friends who were then on the faculty. So we fell right into a very pleasant social situation.

This man, whose name was Dr. Robert Hall, taught Far Eastern geography. I asked him if he had ever heard of Louis Ledoux, and he had, and wanted to know why I had. As we talked some more, he said, "Why don't you go back to school?"

The thought had never occurred to me until that time. I said, "Oh, I couldn't," and the usual things; I had a one-year-old child, didn't have much money. He said, "Well, you come to my office on

Gatov: Monday, and we'll see what we can work out in the way of schedule." This was July or August, so there was still time. There wasn't the pressure that there is now to apply very early.

Anyhow, we did work out a schedule, for a degree in something pretty new then, called Far Eastern Civilizations. At that time--this was '35, '36, and '37--only the University of California at Berkeley, and Harvard, besides Michigan, were giving degrees in this field.

All the problems were able to be worked out quite easily. I got someone to come in early in the morning, who would stay until noon. All of my classes were in the morning, and I took care of the baby in the afternoon. I did my studying at night, and was able to take books out of the library, or borrow them, in this case, mostly from the professors.

It was not nearly as difficult as I had thought it was going to be.

Chall: And your husband acquiesced?

Gatov: Oh, yes, because he was going to law school. There was no problem there. It decreased any desire on my part to go do other things. The subject really never came up. I think he was quite pleased about it, as I recall.

There was one man teaching there then named James Marshall Plummer, who was quite a scholar, and became very well established in the field of early Chinese ceramics. He had a fabulous collection of his own. That collection was the reason for one of the courses--I forget what it was called, in the catalogue.

We called it "warehouse technique," because it included unpacking his collection, which had just arrived from China, and cataloguing it, and sending various bits and pieces of it off on loan to various museums in the United States. We sort of kept his show on the road, so to speak.

He and his wife had spent a lot of time digging in kiln sites. I forget how they got to China, but they'd gone into the interior to visit a friend who'd been a classmate of his at Harvard, who was the American consul. The consul died while they were there; he got a letter out to Washington, notifying them of the consul's death, saying he was just a friend staying there. And the next word he had was, "Will you continue to stay there until we can find a replacement?"

He was acting consul for, I think, nearly a year.

Chall: I see. This was about '34?

Gatov: In '34, I would guess.

Chall: And problems arose with the Japanese?

Gatov: Oh, yes. Long before the Japanese problems, they were still having their civil war between Chiang Kai-shek and Mao. Apparently, he didn't seem to be disturbed by that in the slightest. Anyhow, they went digging at every opportunity, and came up with a marvelous collection of T'ang and Sung pottery, which I became entranced with, too.

Chall: Yes, what a treat!

Gatov: It was. I just felt that this whole world out there existed, and I didn't know anything about it, so I was a sponge.

So two years went by. My husband, about this time, evidenced a mental illness which neither of us seemed able to handle. Although we consulted several psychiatrists in the Chicago area, they couldn't foresee any solution within the marriage; so we were divorced in Ann Arbor.

Chall: And that was about when?

Gatov: In '37. He left and went to southern California.

Chall: Did he finish law school?

Gatov: No. He was two and a half years into it, and he decided that he didn't want to finish it.

Chall: So that kind of shattered two lives unexpectedly?

Gatov: Yes, it really did. He left, and I stayed, and finished getting my degree.

Chall: You were almost through then?

Gatov: Yes. I had one more semester to go.

Chall: What about your income at that point? Were your parents supporting you in any way?

Gatov: Yes. Both of our parents helped. They each sent us \$125 a month, which in those days was plenty. We even had a car. I think the rent we paid was something like \$55 a month. [Laughs] I do remember the

Gatov: food bills were about the same, about \$55 a month, for three--really four people, because of the girl who came in and helped with the baby. We were able to get along very well.

Chall: So there wasn't that strain in going to school?

Gatov: No.

Career Choices Closed

Chall: You did get your degree, then, in Far Eastern Civilizations?

Gatov: Yes. Then I talked to the dean of the law school. He discouraged me completely and said, "You don't want to spend the rest of your life doing somebody else's work in the stacks."

Chall: Oh? You thought of that?

Gatov: I thought of going to law school, too.

Chall: And they assured you that as a woman, you would never be a lawyer?

Gatov: I could never be my own lawyer.

Chall: I see.

Gatov: I'd be working for somebody else, and he would get all the credit, and I would just spend my time looking up material for his cases.

Chall: How did you feel when they told you that? Was that acceptable?

Gatov: I accepted it as a fact of life. I didn't like it, but I knew the dean and his wife--I forget their name, at the moment--socially, and there was no reason for him to try to discourage me, particularly. I felt that he was being sort of generously candid in saying, in effect, that this is a closed field.

So then I tried museums. I went to five, and they all said the same thing.

Chall: Around Michigan? Ann Arbor? Where did you go to?

Gatov: No, I went to where the good Oriental collections were, in Washington, New York, Boston, and Brooklyn, in those days. And, of course, the Depression was still on.

Gatov: Two drawbacks--one was that I didn't have knowledge of either the Chinese or Japanese language. The other was that I was a woman, and they just said, really, essentially the same thing. "All we have women do here is dust the exhibits. I just don't think you're going to like to wield a feather duster for years."

Chall: You were overqualified already.

Gatov: So, I left Ann Arbor after graduation, and took my little collection--by this time, I had two fine pieces. I had one given to me by Professor Plummer, and another by the assistant dean, who was also a friend of Plummer's. I loaned them to the museum in Montreal, which had nothing in the Sung period at all. There they stayed for years and years.

I was happy about it because they were safe, and people could enjoy them. I didn't have to take care of them, but there they were.

Chall: You had to figure out what you were going to do if you couldn't be a lawyer, or you couldn't work in a museum?

Gatov: This became more and more of a problem. At that time, I really sort of gave up on independent career-hunting.

My father--I think I mentioned this earlier--while he'd expected me to perform at least as well as my brothers did, and certainly gave me as good an education as they had, nevertheless felt that if I were to go to work, it was an indication that he was not competent to support me.

This would, therefore, be a reflection on him. He made it quite plain.

Moving Home: Life and Work in Montreal and Pinehurst

Chall: You went home then, I take it.

Gatov: So then I went home, with my little girl. She was the only grandchild, and my parents were very, very fond of her. So I began moving from Montreal to Pinehurst and from Pinehurst to Montreal, which meant that any kind of sustained work was really out of the question.

Chall: Pinehurst, that was--

Gatov: --North Carolina.

Chall: Oh, I see. So you went with them when they went to Pinehurst for the winter. You just traveled with your family, and you weren't independent any more?

Gatov: Not at all.

Chall: That must have been quite--at least when you were in school, you were in school. You weren't traveling back and forth with them.

Gatov: It was quite an adjustment, and I think I was a little surprised at how much of an adjustment it was. My father died during this period, in June 1938.

While I lived with my parents there was plenty of help, so I didn't have to do a lot of the things that most young mothers do have to do. They decided that it would be all right if I did do some work.

Chall: What kind?

Gatov: Quite a variety! [Laughs]

Chall: Paid or volunteer?

Gatov: Paid. No. I did some volunteer, too, but I wanted some paid work. I wanted some money of my own. It was that simple, because though the divorce settlement included child support, there never was any.

I got a job in the local dress shop, which had just opened up.

Chall: In Pinehurst?

Gatov: In Pinehurst. I started selling dresses, and I also started doing tutoring at the local school, where I had gone myself years earlier. It was an excellent school, run by a woman named Miss Chapman.

She took children who were down there with their parents--all stages of school, of course. They would bring their books and their assignments, and our job, the part-time faculty job, was to work with these children individually and see that they were where they ought to be by the time they went home. It was very interesting; it was my first teaching experience. I liked it very much. That is when I began to learn something about algebra. [Laughs]

Chall: These children were of all ages?

Gatov: Yes. Both sexes, and all ages.

Chall: And they would come from extended periods of time? Like two or three months with their parents?

Gatov: Perhaps that long, perhaps just three weeks. The fact that her school was there was part of the publicity of the town. Pinehurst, in those days, was owned by the Tufts family, who'd founded it in 1910. They owned all the land, and they owned all the hotels, and shops, and everything. In their little brochures, they remarked that in addition to the public school, there was a private tutoring school. It went along for years; Miss Chapman died about five years ago.

Chall: Is that right? And so this was a private tutoring school just for the children of people who came there to spend some vacation?

Gatov: Or for the children of people who lived there all winter. They could also go there and go right along. So she acquired her tutors as she acquired her students. [Laughs]

Chall: You might be able to pay for your vacation? [Laughs]

Gatov: So that went on that year. Then I don't recall very much about what happened after my father died. It was in the summer. I do recall something, which might be of interest someday to somebody.

My mother and my sister-in-law and I were very close at this time. I think we were all living together--in other words, my brother Jack, of whom I've spoken quite fondly earlier, and his wife, who was a lovely person named Ruby--we were all together in our country place the summer Father died. He died in June.

Mother said one day that she would like to take us, if we were interested, to somebody who was a psychic. I don't at the moment recall her name, but I think--Quest Brown! about whom Mother had apparently heard some very interesting things. So she made an appointment for the three of us, and we went.

Well, I don't recall in what order she saw us, but I will never forget what happened when I went in. This woman had a string of amber beads. She kept feeling the beads, and then she handed me the beads; and said, "Just keep these in your hand for a minute or two." She was English, as I recall. So I kept the beads in my hand, and she took them from me, and she said, "You have lost someone very close to you, very recently, who died of an intestinal problem." My father died of a ruptured appendix. I don't recall whether I was number three, and, you know, whether she'd picked this up. She could have, I suppose.

Gatov: Then she went on, talking about me. She knew I didn't really live in Montreal, but I had some connection with it. She said, "You probably will be urged to stay here, but don't stay here. You don't belong here. You belong far away. Far, far away!"

She didn't get any more specific than that, but really was quite firm. She was not an odd kind of person. She wasn't mysterious in her dress, no crystal ball, nothing weird in any way. Perfectly normal kind of a person, or so it seemed to me.

In any case, I was very interested in the fact that she had said that my future was not there. So of course, we all compared notes afterwards. She told my mother, for instance, that there would be no more deaths in her immediate family for quite a few years. So we all left feeling pretty good.

That's just a little insert.

Then Mother, Janie and I went back down to Pinehurst that fall, and this time I worked in a place called the Mediterranean Shop, which sold antiques. It was run by a very vindictive, unpleasant woman. One of the requirements of the job was that you stay after work and drink with her. Well, I didn't drink very much in those days, and she was pretty awful when she was drinking. So I finally quit.

Chall: That's a strange request of an employee.

Gatov: Well, it wasn't really a request, it was just made plain. I don't know how to put it.

Chall: Almost more than a request, it's part of the job.

Gatov: So I just decided it wasn't for me, and left.

Meantime, I had met a young man who was an attorney there, who came from Lexington, Virginia. His name was Frank McCluer. We saw an increasing amount of each other.

Married and Widowed

Chall: Was he there vacationing, or did he work?

Gatov: No, he was working in a small law office in Aberdeen, about six miles away. After a couple of years, we were married. We were married a little over two years.

Chall: When were you married?

Gatov: In 1939. Then Pearl Harbor came, December 7, 1941. He was killed December 28, 1941, playing polo.

Chall: At Pinehurst?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Was that one of his regular sports?

Gatov: Yes. We both rode a lot. I should get in here something about the life of that community, because it's going to end pretty soon. It was a very happy time for me. We lived in Southern Pines, which was also about six miles from Pinehurst.

We started to build a house, which included a self-sustaining wing attached to the house, but really quite separate from it, that my mother was going to live in. She would have two bedrooms and a living room, and a dining and kitchen area, and then we would have a larger house but it would all be part of the same.

It really looked as though things were going to be very nice. He had a lot of friends whom I had not met before, who lived in Southern Pines, which is a much more stable community than Pinehurst. People tended to have that as their main place of residence, even though a lot of them were northerners. They might go North for the summer, but Southern Pines was home. In contrast to Pinehurst, where someplace else was home and they came down there for the winter.

I met James and Katherine Boyd. He was an author who wrote Drums and Marching On, and a number of Revolutionary-era things, and wrote some poetry. And I met Buffy Ives, who was Adlai Stevenson's sister.

The Boyds and the Iveses became very close friends of ours. We still didn't have much money, but they included us in a great many things. The Boyds had a newspaper, The Pilot, which they encouraged me to write for, and I did, and enjoyed that immensely. They paid me modest sums, [laughs] just enough to encourage me and keep me in paper, I guess.

Director of Well Baby Clinics

Gatov: They propelled me into some fields. I became a trustee of the local library, and the most long-reaching thing that I did was to become the head of the Moore County Well Baby Clinics. And these, I'm sure Katherine Boyd, who was a Lamont, paid for herself. I never inquired too much.

My job was to find doctors to man the clinics, locate sites for the clinics, and a nurse. The public health nurse usually was available. We would rotate the clinics in the different towns in the county, once a week.

Chall: Was it a poor county, amidst this general wealth?

Gatov: Yes. There were two communities of wealth, Pinehurst and Southern Pines. The rest of the county was like any place else in North Carolina in those days, quite poor. Poor white and poor black. I remember, for instance, a maid we had whom I paid three dollars a week. She was delighted to get it. It seems incredible today.
[Laughs]

The clinics were segregated, needless to say, in those days. I began learning some of the differences among people who were poor. The poor whites were infinitely more deprived and their way of life, in my opinion at any rate, was much more primitive than that of the blacks.

I thought about it a lot, and came to the conclusion that the reason was that whites normally lived separately. They didn't live in communities. They lived at the end of wagon tracks that you often see as you're driving along small roads, in the Carolinas or Georgia. Just a pair of tracks that go off between pine trees.

At the end of that, you'd find a house, with chickens, and a dog, and maybe a little tilled land; but the people by and large were less educated and less trained in anything than any whites I had ever seen before.

They were what was known as the "cracker," and they really were. Very inbred, and frightfully ignorant. I remember one woman, for instance, who later brought her baby to the clinic. When she went into labor, the husband put a rope around her and squeezed--he pulled the rope through the loop and practically cut her in half.

Chall: My word!

Gatov: He finally got her to a hospital, and she survived. But he did this because this was the way he used to deliver his cows, he said.

Chall: Was this their first baby?

Gatov: Far as I knew, it was their first baby.

Chall: Oh my goodness!

Gatov: This kind of ignorant brutality you never would find in the black community. They were truly communities. West Southern Pines, for Southern Pines, Taylortown, for Pinehurst. They had churches, schools, doctors in their own communities.

The streets usually weren't paved, they didn't look terribly prosperous, and they weren't prosperous. But nevertheless, they knew each other and they helped each other.

We had some midwives employed in the county, but I don't think that most of the black births were attended by a professional unless they happened to have a doctor. West Southern Pines did--but some of the other black communities did not.

Chall: Were these white doctors, if there were doctors, or were there black doctors?

Gatov: Black doctors would come to the clinic, and a white doctor--a white Catholic doctor, Frank Owens--would come to the black clinics as well as the white clinics.

These black families were better adjusted to taking care of children. We never saw any battered black children, for instance. I don't want to make too many wide generalities, but in the two years I did this work, I never saw a black battered child, and I saw plenty of battered white ones. Not only battered, but with frightful skin diseases, scaly heads, and malnutrition--this kind of thing.

The black children were really--I then understood why people just loved black babies, because they were so cute. They were well taken care of. They were bathed, at any rate, before they came to the clinic. They were all dressed up. It was my first exposure to blacks doing anything except cleaning the house or carrying a golf bag around a golf course, or that kind of thing.

Chall: What was the basis of their economy?

Gatov: Working for the whites.

Chall: That was all?

Gatov: Practically all. Some of them, I guess, did rather menial mechanic helper jobs, in various garages. Some of them were teachers in their own school. By and large, they survived on the white community.

Chall: And the white poor lived on subsistence on their own land?

Gatov: On their own land, or they might be sharecroppers for some of the tobacco farmers who lived around there. The peach orchards were big then in those days. They might come in during that season.

But they lived a very dismal life, with a lot of diseases. I remember a woman with a goiter hanging right down onto her chest, and this kind of thing.

The blacks were visible, in this particular area, and there were a number of people in the white community who were interested in them, and were concerned about them.

Chall: The Well Baby Clinic was a private clinic?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Totally, then?

Gatov: Totally. They paid nothing, and the county paid nothing, except they did release their public health nurse for the days that we had the clinics.

Chall: Was there any attempt, at that time, to teach birth control? Was that an allowable subject?

Gatov: It wasn't particularly, there, and I don't remember being concerned about it there.

But prior to being down there, when I was still living in Storm King, my sister-in-law Ruby asked if I could find her the Planned Parenthood office in New York, because in those days, until quite recently, contraception was illegal in Canada.

They didn't want to have a child right away, so she came down to New York and I made an appointment for her and went with her to a Planned Parenthood office which was down in Greenwich Village some place, and was staffed by women doctors. It wasn't a remodeled old house; it was just an old house.

Gatov: Ruby was gone for quite a little while, and when she came back, she looked quite shaken. The doctor came with her. She said, "Mrs. Rudel has some sort of a growth in her uterus, and she should go to her own doctor as soon as she gets home." Meanwhile, I have given her a diaphragm and jelly.

So Ruby went off with a prescription for quite a lot of jelly, and she, at least, was equipped. She went back, saw her doctor, and he operated on what was the beginning of a whole series of uterine and ovarian cysts, and so forth. She finally died of cancer, but not until 1968. She lived a long time after that, but they never had any children. The interesting thing was that her own doctor never caught it.

Chall: He hadn't examined her, really?

Gatov: Not adequately.

So that was when I first heard about Planned Parenthood, and I must say, I thought their standards were high! [Laughs]

Chall: I should say. That's a very interesting story.

Drag Hunts and Polo

Gatov: The rest of time, when I wasn't involved in good works, [laughs] so to speak, during that marriage I rode a lot. As I said, Frank liked to hunt. It scared me to death.

Chall: He was a sportsman type.

Gatov: He had his own horse. So I took jumping lessons and went hunting with him, which was a very interesting experience now that I don't have to do it any more.

Chall: What did they hunt?

Gatov: Foxes, but mostly they were drag hunts.

Chall: What is a drag hunt?

Gatov: A drag hunt--everything is the same, except that the course is laid out ahead of time, by a man who is dragging behind him a bunch of old potato sacks that he has had in the foxes' kennel. In other words,

Gatov: they had some foxes that they kept in a kennel. They would put these gunny sacks in the foxes' kennel, and then attached to a long piece of rope, haul it--literally, along the course. Then they'd put it back where the foxes were.

The hounds would come out, get the scent, just as though they were following a real fox, and go madly off, [laughs] with us behind them.

The only nice thing about that was that you knew where you were going.

Chall: And you didn't shoot anything, did you?

Gatov: You didn't kill anything, no.

Chall: So it was just a matter of riding?

Gatov: Yes, a matter of riding.

Chall: And exercising the hounds?

Gatov: Early in the morning. It was really lovely. When I wasn't terrified, it was delightful.

Chall: And you could ride a horse that was going as fast as that?

Gatov: Well, I'd always ridden, but not this kind of riding. I'd done a little more "hacking," just leisurely, for fun. This was much more serious business.

Chall: I see. So there were many horsemen there, and polo was the major game?

Gatov: Polo was the major game, besides golf. Fort Bragg was then quite a small military installation, about forty miles away. They would play versus the Sandhills, as this area of North Carolina was referred to. Frank was one of the seven or eight or nine who was available to play, and did.

The horse ran away with him, and he apparently tried to make it jump a little low fence, which would have taken him onto a golf course. Well, polo ponies don't jump. But they are trained to turn very fast, and this one turned, and threw him against a pine tree. He broke his neck.

Chall: How tragic and you had a very young child about this time.

Gatov: This was 1941--end of December.

Chall: She was about seven?

Gatov: Seven. Soon I realized that I wanted to get away from that community. It didn't have anything for me, after that, though we had many friends, and it had been a very pleasant existence.

Chall: It was a good marriage?

Gatov: It was a very good marriage.

[end Tape 2, side 1, begin Tape 2, side 2]

World War II and New Horizons

Gatov: I learned then that someone who has been happily married has a more difficult time adjusting to being alone. Instead of it being a relief, at first the loneliness is pretty awful.

But they're much more likely to get married again quite soon, because they feel the need of companionship, and they have faith. They're not recovering from a bad situation, they're trying to live through a good situation, that has terminated.

Anyhow, I felt that the golf and bridge--we used to play a lot--was no longer for me. First of all, we were in a war, which was a very serious matter. It's almost hard to recall the confusion in people's minds about what was going on.

Our innate optimism certainly went, with Pearl Harbor. I remember--possibly it was because we were so close to Ft. Bragg--we were blacked out every night, and we lived in a feeling of expectation that the Japanese were going to drop the other shoe someplace--whether California, or who knew?

We were close to a military installation, as I said, and maybe the Germans were going to do something. It was kind of a time of pandemonium.

So I remember trying to get into the WAVES, which was the women's end of the Navy. I knew the undersecretary of the Navy, who was a friend of one of my brothers. He used to come down to Pinehurst a lot. I didn't qualify for that because I had a child. In those days, they didn't take anybody who had a child.

Gatov: So then I thought about getting a job on the Reader's Digest. I went to see somebody working on LIFE magazine who was a friend of a friend.

Chall: Why the Reader's Digest? What brought that on?

Gatov: I just thought it sounded sort of settled and secure. And I knew it was published in Pleasantville, New York, which is in Westchester County, and a very pleasant area to bring up a child, close to where I'd gone to school. I knew the country. I obviously didn't know much about the Reader's Digest. I hadn't been reading it frequently, I guess.

Anyhow, I remember going to see this friend who worked on LIFE, and he said, "Good God! You couldn't stand that!" [Laughs] So with this helpful piece of advice--

Chall: People were always telling you you couldn't work where you wanted to work!

Gatov: Couldn't do it. Well, in this case, he was certainly right.

So I went up to Montreal from New York to go skiing. My Canadian brother had a little house up in the Laurentian mountains. It was a cute sort of habitant-type house about four miles in from the railroad station, south of a place called St. Adèle.

It had a fireplace, kerosene lamps, and an outhouse and a big wood stove. I'd been there many times earlier, and knew how to operate it.

I went with a woman friend of mine that I'd gone to school with, and we were up there for about three weeks--in March--early March. And it was very good for me--something about being out in the snow, and the silence, and the lack of intrusion--no telephones, no people dropping in. It was a very therapeutic time for me.

After we left the Laurentians, we decided to go skiing another week, and went to Stowe, Vermont, which was new in those days. We had a very pleasant week or so there.

I got on the train to come home.

Chall: Which was still Pinehurst?

Gatov: I was still living at Pinehurst. Frank and I were living with my mother, because we were building this house together in Southern Pines, which was about three-quarters finished. We expected to move in by spring. It seemed sort of simpler.

Gatov: Mother, of course, was alone, and she kept urging that we do this. She liked having Janie there. She enjoyed all the commotion, and it wasn't that long a period of being together. Her house was a fair-sized house. She used to go to Florida for little trips. It worked well.

Anyhow, I got to the station in Stowe, and saw a man sitting there in a uniform, which I thought, in my vast ignorance, was American customs. I had smuggled something into Canada. I'd smuggled a radio for my brother's mother-in-law. [Laughs]

Canada, of course, had been at war since 1939, and they were feeling pinches that we hadn't even started to. We hadn't begun anything yet. I thought, "Oh my, they've found out!" [Laughs] He's traced me to Stowe, and here I go!

Well, it was not customs. He was the man I later married! [Laughs] I discovered it was a navy uniform, not customs.

Chall: How did you discover it?

Gatov: He began telling me. We got on the train, and he had the upper berth, and I had the lower berth. Somehow, I wound up in the upper berth, and he wound up in the lower berth, because he had a cold!

Anyway, I don't think he really suggested it. I think I was the one who suggested it, and he took me up on it, much to my surprise! [Laughs] Anyway, I didn't mind uppers.

So we had a few drinks in Lily cups, and he told me that he was in the Navy and going back to Norfolk, where he was stationed and so forth. He had gone to Princeton and was in the class behind my oldest brother, and they'd known each other. We sort of started off from there.

Then I went back to Pinehurst, and I don't remember--yes, I was doing some more tutoring. There was another tutoring school, The Ark over in Southern Pines, where I was teaching fairly regularly, all the time that Frank and I were living there. I continued doing that the rest of the spring.

His name was Fred Smith--and he knew he was going to be going overseas fairly soon. He was skipper of a sub chaser. They were very small little boats that carried depth charges on them. By early summer we decided that we would get married. This was July of 1942.

Marriage and the Move to California

Chall: July of 1942. So you really married very soon after.

Gatov: Yes, within eight months, which horrified my mother, because she was devoted to Frank. She didn't know what she thought of Fred. He was not exactly diplomatic with her all the time.

Chall: And he was what in civilian life?

Gatov: He'd been a banker, working with what was then the Hanover Bank. It's now something else, the something-else Hanover Bank.

Chall: In New York?

Gatov: In New York. He lived in New Jersey, South Orange. His mother was a widow, and had been for some years. His father had been a stockbroker. He dropped dead when Fred was about nine, I think. He'd gone to Lawrenceville and Princeton.

We again shared a great deal intellectually in common. I didn't tell you much about that with Frank. Each time I married, there were very strong communities of interest. Frank was so distressed about the way black people were treated, for instance. If it hadn't been for the war, and if he hadn't been killed, he was about to move out of the South, because he felt that the South was never going to change in its attitudes.

He'd come from the Shenandoah Valley, which is quite different from the eastern shore part of Virginia in its attitudes. It's much simpler. It was never a slave-owning part of the South, and it had far different attitudes toward blacks, even though of course they'd been in the Civil War, and so forth.

His grandfather and my grandfather were on different sides in the Civil War, so we often talked about trying to get their two swords, and crossing them over the mantelpiece, but we never quite did.

But Fred, unlike a lot of his colleagues in those days at Princeton, and certainly in the banking world, was a Democrat. He was very enthusiastic about Franklin Roosevelt, and had a lot of friends who were in the administration.

The impersonal things, in each case, were the things that started to bring us together, I think, looking back.

Chall: The intellectual interests?

Gatov: Yes, this was the base, initially. And when he heard that I was my oldest brother's sister, he just laughed, and said, "That's ridiculous!" [Laughs]

Well, it wasn't, but we were very different.

So, we were married in South Orange at the end of August, I think. Yes, the twenty-second of August 1942.

Chall: I take it that this was his first marriage.

Gatov: His first marriage. All the families took it bravely. His family, because--here he was marrying a woman who had been married twice before, and had a child, which I'm sure didn't please his mother or his aunts very much. Here was my mother, thinking I was nothing but a hussy. How could I possibly do this?

Chall: Certainly a wanton woman!

Gatov: Absolutely!

Chall: But still her daughter.

Gatov: I was still her daughter, so she bravely did her part. We had a very simple, very pleasant wedding, and then took off for Norfolk, Virginia, where he was still stationed, and lived at the navy base--just outside the navy base, until he was sent, briefly, to Boston for some more training. He was there about six weeks.

Then we went down to Miami. For this period, Jane, my daughter, stayed at Mother's, because we knew we'd be bouncing around until we were at Miami. At Christmas she came down there with us. That's when I learned about landlords and children. Nobody wanted to rent to a family. An eight year old girl isn't a very threatening person, I wouldn't think! [Laughs]

We had a terrible time finding a place, but we finally did find a place. The next nine weeks, I guess, we were together there. I became pregnant, and nearly lost the baby. The navy doctors did a remarkable job in helping me keep it, I thought.

He finally sailed from Key West, and went on out to the Pacific.

He had a hearing problem, which I had noticed when I first met him. And then, after I was married to him, I realized that it was more acute than I'd thought. In other words, he'd developed some cover-up devices which I think people do when they have some affliction of this sort.

Gatov: For instance, as soon as I'd say something, he would turn and face me, instead of just going right on being in the position that he was in.

Chall: Both ears?

Gatov: No, just one. Anyhow, he went through a very traumatic experience that I know very little about, when he went off with whoever was to be commander of the squadron of submarine chasers, who apparently suspected this hearing loss. Fred was so anxious that he not detect it, because he knew he wouldn't be able to go if he did.

Somehow he got through this, but when he came back from this shakedown cruise, he was a very upset man. They left about a week later from Key West, and off they went through the Panama Canal, out to Bora Bora and all those places that I'd never heard of before.

He was very anxious that I live with his mother, that we get acquainted, and that the child be born there. So we did. Janie and I moved in with Mrs. Smith, who was really very gracious. I know it was a trial to her, but she did her best not to show it too much. She was a very gregarious woman with quite a sense of humor.

I think she was pretty good to put up with us. She understood, too, that this was part of what he wanted, and so, all right.

Chall: Was he an only child?

Gatov: No, he was number three. Three girls, and him. He had the same position in his family that I had in mine. He had two older sisters and one younger, and he was the only boy.

Dan was born in September. Fred came back about a month before Dan was born.

Chall: On leave?

Gatov: No, he was sent back because when he had come up for promotion they caught the hearing loss, and sent him back, and he was at Oak Knoll Hospital in Oakland for quite a while.

My doctor wouldn't let me come out, so I stayed in South Orange, and he eventually arrived, and was attached to St. Albans Naval hospital in Brooklyn, not too far away.

Chall: Was he in the hospital because of his hearing?

Gatov: Because of his hearing. They couldn't make up their minds whether it was malingering, or whether it was real, and he went through an endless amount of tests, about which I know very little.

Anyhow, finally they made their decision, that it was real, and that he should be assigned to shore duty. So he was assigned to San Francisco. He had been to the west coast before. I never had.

As I recall, in telling me about it, he and a friend of his, the summer before we got into the war, thought that the war was coming, and we'd be involved, and that they being single, certainly would be involved. So they began picking out their postwar homes! [Laughs]

They got out to San Diego, rented a car, and drove to Seattle. The place they liked the best was San Francisco. Of course, that was also the headquarters of the Twelfth Naval District during the war, and still is.

So he came out ahead, and I arrived on a troop train with the baby, who was then six months old. I was still nursing him, mercifully, which made the whole trip just so much easier.

We arrived at two in the morning, and Fred met us. This was in the middle of February. We drove across the Bay Bridge, and up the hill to the Fairmont [Hotel], which was then a Transient Officers' quarters. They just had everything ready for us--a crib, and so forth.

We got out of the car, and there were these banks of blooming azaleas! And I thought, [laughs] what heaven! Because I'd left New Jersey--winter or summer, it's a pretty bad place, but winter is really ghastly. Gray, and the snow is filthy all the time. It was then. Not nice, good, clean cold, but just dirty, wet, clammy cold.

We stayed at the Fairmont for two weeks, while we tried to find a place to live, which he hadn't been successful at. Eventually we found a little house in Larkspur, in Marin county.

I'm sure we're the only service family who went through the war with what was called an "A" card for gasoline rationing--three gallons a week. He was very sticky about these things. He took the bus; I took the bus. We lived near enough to the shopping areas so that I could put the baby in the buggy and do the marketing. It worked perfectly well.

That's the reason we finally wound up in Kentfield, because we'd never had enough gasoline to see any other part of the Bay Area. [Laughs] We did go visit a friend who lived in Kentfield--a friend, of another friend--and saw this very pleasant place that was developing, called Kent Woodlands.

Building a Home in Kentfield

Gatov: Very few houses had been built on that lovely land. So we bought a lot. In fact, we bought two lots. Beautiful, scenic spot. Then we got word that the owner of the house we were renting, who was also a navy officer, was being discharged for some reason. The war was sort of dribbling to an end at this point.

He was being discharged, and he wanted his house back. So we had to move. We couldn't find any place, really, to buy. There was a war-time provision, that if you couldn't find a place to buy, and were service personnel, and such-and-such, you could build a house of a certain number of square feet even though there'd been no building for several years. We just fitted right into this little regulation. Then we couldn't build on the land we bought, because the utilities weren't in, so we bought another lot on the flat part, that had been hooked up, and built the house there, where I still am.

I began to realize the joys of living very near the entrance, very near the school, flat, the kids could bicycle and play in the street. I didn't have to be a taxi driver, because they could get themselves around, and it just worked beautifully.

We eventually sold the other two lots.

Chall: Did you bring Janie back to San Francisco as soon as you were settled here?

Gatov: Yes, she came out with me. She came out on the train also, and went to school in Larkspur that year. The school conditions were very crowded, I presume because of the impact of the service personnel. I remember there were fifty-five in her class, which seemed to me a bit much.

So I found out about Dominican Convent in San Rafael. Of course, in those days we had carpools, so that's where she went for the rest of her elementary school.

The war ended, and Fred went into the office equipment business; duplicating machines, collaters, things that stuff and seal envelopes, and that sort.

Chall: Did he open up his own business?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Where?

Gatov: On Bush Street.

Chall: Bush Street, in San Francisco?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Why did he choose business, rather than going back into banking?

Gatov: I really don't know. No, I think I do know. He had been offered several jobs, one of them with the Schlage Lock Company. He didn't want to work for anybody else. I think this was quite a strong feeling of his.

Chall: And how was his hearing at this point?

Gatov: By this time, he had a hearing aid which he had accepted very well. I say, "accepted it very well," in the sense that he never tried to conceal the fact that he had difficulty hearing. He didn't mind saying to you, "Would you mind speaking a little louder?" or more slowly, or something like that. He didn't try to hide it in his clothes. That part of it, he did extremely well.

Chall: What were you doing during the war? You had two young children, of course, in a strange community.

Gatov: Well, Janie was in school. Then I found some other mothers who were willing to take each others' children three days a week. There were four children, altogether, involved, which gave two of the mothers two days off a week. It really worked beautifully.

Volunteer Community Activities

Gatov: And then I became involved with the Red Cross--I'd been involved before I left Southern Pines--and went over to the Red Cross in San Rafael, and offered my services. They decided that I would be a Gray Lady, so I worked at Hamilton Air Force Base Hospital.

This was very interesting to me, because they flew the wounded back from the Pacific, and this was their first stop back in this country. They did not bring in any of the neurological cases, or the mental cases. They brought them back by ship, the idea being that just the tranquility of the ocean voyage might possibly help.

Gatov: So everybody that we saw--badly messed up as they might be-- nevertheless was in good shape emotionally, and ecstatic to be home. They wanted to drink just quarts of milk, gallons of milkshakes, tons of ice cream. This seemed to be what they all wanted.

Then we would arrange phone calls--long-distance calls--home. You quickly learned that one of the first things you ought to say when you met up with somebody was, "Welcome home! Where are you from?" Well, they'd be from Keokuk, and Keokuk turned out to be just the most heavenly place in the world! Wherever it was! [Laughs] The most, in my recollection, desolate and God-forsaken part of the country--if it was home, that was where they wanted to be.

And the conditions [in the hospital] were sometimes perfectly awful. The men were lying on litters in the corridors, and so forth, because the authorities hadn't been able to get patients out fast enough to make room for others coming in. Generally, however, they were flown, within a week, to a general hospital near their home.

It was really a very well run, very intelligent operation, and my respect for military know-how escalated with this experience. I felt I was doing something valuable, because there weren't nearly enough nurses to be able to give any personal attention in addition to seeing about their private wants, letters, presents to their families. Ice cream and milk are things which are easy to take care of.

Some of the men had family problems, and then another branch of the Red Cross, if we notified them, would come in and pick that up, to see what could be done, or get information if they couldn't reach their wife on the telephone, and wondered what happened to her. So I felt that I was doing worthwhile work.

Chall: Two days a week did you devote to this?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Your two days out?

Gatov: My two days out, I did that. Fred didn't like it, finally. I remember him saying, "Why can't you do something that isn't all men?" In fact, he got so upset about the whole thing that he finally asked me to stop.

Chall: This was still during the war?

Gatov: Yes. So I told Mrs. Kittle--Mrs. John Kittle--who was then the president of the Marin Red Cross, what had happened, and that I wouldn't be able to keep on. She sort of harrumphed a few times, and thought it was pretty silly, and I said, "Well, this is the way it is."

Gatov: So I didn't work for quite a few weeks, and then finally they called again, and said, "We're desperately short handed." So then I just told him that I was going to do it, that I was sorry he didn't like it, and I thought his view of it would change. If he'd just come out there, and see that there was no possible opportunity to develop anything like a personal relationship with anybody.

Anyhow, he didn't fuss about it anymore, and I went back.

So the war finally ended, and he went back into civilian life. My Red Cross activities petered out, but not before I'd had a very interesting invitation from Warden Duffy of San Quentin Prison. I was, by that time, chairman of the Camp and Hospital division of Marin Red Cross.

They had a hospital in San Quentin, which he said was terribly underequipped, and he was sure, as they were closing up some of the military hospitals, there must be some equipment lying around. You know, the operating room lights, surgical instruments, and this kind of thing for which he had no money in his budget.

So he took me on a tour of San Quentin, which was the beginning of a very interesting series of things that happened after that, and which I wrote about when I was, later, a reporter on the local paper.

Warden Duffy was a remarkable man, in my view. He felt that the prison, the prisoners, and the community would be better off if they knew each other. So quite frequently, every couple of weeks, the prisoners would put on shows, and community people would be invited to come in and buy tickets to these things. The money would go into some sort of fund for the prisoners.

He circulated the prison newspaper quite widely. He was trying to get people to understand that people who were in prison were no different, really--except that they were there, and we weren't--from the rest of us; that the prison wasn't necessarily a threat to the community; that the community could probably make things better for themselves and for the prison if they would take an interest in it.

Things have changed a lot since then. [Laughs] I don't recall, when we took that tour, having any feeling of fear. There were no particular guards--just he and I walked through the yard and into the building that had the hospital facilities in it, and then he showed me various other facilities. They had the jute mill in those days, and the chapel, and some of the carpenters' shops, classrooms, a tailor shop.

Anyway, they got that material.



Chall: Through your activity?

Gatov: I started it. I made out a list of the things they needed, and I forwarded that on through the Red Cross chain, and eventually I got a very nice letter from him, saying, "Thank you very much, we have it! We're very grateful." It was worth it in that sense, but it was an illuminating experience to me. I'd never been in a prison before.

And by this time, I was treasurer of Sunny Hills, which in those days was sort of an institutional foster home, really, for wards of the court.

Chall: Where?

Gatov: In San Anselmo.

Chall: And how did you get into that?

Gatov: Oh, somebody asked me. [Laughs] I guess somebody I knew from the Red Cross, probably. And I was on the TB Association [board]. I was also on the board of the Junior League, which I had joined when I lived in Storm King. I must admit this now. Goodness! [Laughs] I am what I am, due to the Junior League! [Laughs]

Some women, who lived near Newburgh, New York, which was close to Storm King--perhaps ten miles--were active in the Junior League there, and they proposed me for membership, and I joined. They had provisional work required--volunteer.

In those days, Franklin Roosevelt was still governor of New York, and the Depression had hit. He was, as I recall, the first governor to start any state program of relief for people who were unemployed.

He had two programs. One was called Home Relief, and one called Work Relief. Work Relief was jobs for men and other able-bodied people. Home Relief was for the elderly and for the families without anybody employed in them.

I was sitting there as a receptionist. My job, after greeting them, was to hand out the forms, and get them filled out, and get them in the right basket, for Work Relief and Home Relief.

Chall: Where would you do this? In Storm King?

Gatov: I went to Newburgh. I was living in Storm King.

Gatov: And this was where I met people who were really such pawns in the system. For instance, I learned then about chain grocery stores. Most of these people had been going to the A and P, which was the grocery store, all their lives, and many of them had lived there for several generations. They weren't a floating population at all. And--no work, no credit. Cash only.

Then they had to go to the 'mom and pop' store, where they'd never been in before, probably, because the prices were a little higher, but they would give them credit.

Well, one of the things that the Home Relief office did was issue scrip which the A and P would accept, because when they cashed it in in Albany, it was money.

This was my first contact, that I can recall, with the government doing anything, and I must say that it was good! [Laughs] I followed the fortunes of Franklin Roosevelt with great interest after that. I wasn't registered to vote because I still hadn't unsnarled my citizenship. Did I tell you about that?

Anyhow, the fact that you are entitled to American citizenship does not automatically give it to you. Nobody knew what to do when I asked. I couldn't register to vote because I didn't have any proof of citizenship. I couldn't get any proof of citizenship because there wasn't any; until finally, in North Carolina, a county clerk said, "Why don't you dream up a trip to Europe, and apply for a passport?"

This bright idea really worked. It took me six months, because my father was dead, and traditionally, as happened in so many cases, the courthouse that had his birth records had burned down. So we had to find people who knew that he was born in Cincinnati. It was pretty complicated. In those days one couldn't acquire U.S. citizenship from the mother.

However, everything was done, and I finally got my passport; so, passport in hand, I eventually was able to vote in 1940. As I say, in this period we're talking about, I still couldn't vote, but I followed the 1932 election with great interest.

I'll never forget his, "My friends, the only thing we have to fear is fear itself;" [laughs] the closing of the banks. I had \$11.50. Everybody who lived through that remembers something specific about it. Then the great wave of hope that went through, you know. At long last, we were going to get off the dime.

Well, as a result of the Junior League, and their placement of me, I became a confirmed Democrat.

Chall: I see; that's what did it.

Gatov: I heard people talking about what a terrible thing it was that Roosevelt was even doing this relief program.

Chall: Oh, you were in the area where they would have thought so, I suppose.

Gatov: Oh, yes. The Liberty League was beginning then, and the husbands of some of my friends were part of it. As I recall, the thing that impressed me was that Roosevelt created, really, the notion that the government had some responsibility for people, beyond the national defense. The welfare part of that phrase of "common good" and so on, really meant something in personal terms.

I've been interested since in reading The Glory and the Dream, by Manchester. The first part of that is all about the early days of the Depression, which is so vivid.

Chall: And you and he remember it about the same?

Gatov: Yes. As far as I'm concerned, it was a very accurate account.

Chall: So that was a very important part of your life.

Gatov: It determined my political bias, for good. I remember then, in 1936, when Alfred Landon was running, and I was sure he was going to win, because it seemed to me that everyone I knew was for Landon. These sunflowers all over the place, in peoples' buttonholes! [Laughs]

Well, that was a landslide, of course, for Roosevelt. I think I was upset by his feelings about the [Supreme] Court, because I voted for Willkie in 1940, my first vote.

Chall: Oh, you did?

Gatov: I was very interested in Wendell Willkie, and particularly in his "One World" concept, which I've never gotten over. I thought then, and I still think, that somehow we're going to have to find our way there.

I remember sitting up very late, listening to the Republican convention--I believe it was in Philadelphia at that time--when they finally get around to nominating Willkie. Then I saw him ultimately in a parade in New York. With the exception of that aberration, I have stayed pretty close to the fold! [Laughs]

Chall: Your studies of the Constitution were still fresh in your mind when you were living in Storm King, that the Court packing plan would have--?

Gatov: It seemed offensive. It seemed unbecoming, almost, that just because the court wouldn't do what he wanted them to--like when they threw out the NRA.... You don't alter the structure in order to solve a problem. The structure had been working pretty well for quite a long time.

I remember also feeling a certain amount of pleasure when he [Roosevelt] campaigned to try to defeat eight Democrats--I can't remember who they were. I think they were eight senators, but I'm not sure--who didn't agree with him. He went into these different states, and campaigned against them, and they all got elected! I thought that was fine! [Laughs]

Chall: Was the intellectual community of Storm King, around the school, the people whom you knew there--were they of similar opinion with respect to Roosevelt?

Gatov: Not the headmaster and his wife. They were very starchy Republicans, I thought. But most of the rest of the faculty were. Our social friends, who we had outside the school, were not Democrats. They were mostly pretty wealthy Republicans from New York who just were there briefly. Awfully nice people.

I don't recall talking too much with them about any of these things. There wasn't any point.

Chall: What about the Leavitts?

Gatov: They were enthusiastic Democrats.

Chall: And the professor, the worthy scholar on Japan?

Gatov: The Ledouxes?

Chall: Yes.

Gatov: They were Democrats.

I have to say that party activity in those days didn't really mean much to me. My interests were much more international than domestic. I was far more familiar with who was in the British cabinet, and the French cabinet, and what was going on in Germany, than I was in what happened here.

I remember TIME magazine used to have quizzes, periodically, and I always did beautifully in the international section! But I fell down on domestic.

Chall: But it was interesting that the Junior League experience brought you into the Democratic fold. I'm sure that really was not the plan of the Junior League.

Gatov: I transferred, as you can in the Junior League, I think to all leagues except New York. I transferred to the San Francisco league, and then they started the Marin County branch, and I was head of that, and that automatically put me on the San Francisco board.

So these are the things that I was doing before I got into my first political campaign, which was in '48.

Chall: You were very active in the community, then?

Gatov: For lots of reasons. We belonged to something called the Lagunitas Club in Ross.

Chall: I've seen that name. What is it?

Gatov: There's Lagunitas Creek, and Lagunitas Lake, and Lagunitas Road. It's a Marin County name.

Chall: Is it a private club, for golf, or a country club or something?

Gatov: Tennis. Tennis and now swimming. When we came out here with the navy, people were very friendly in the community. We had a few vague contacts, but I found that people were most hospitable and friendly. For instance, we got into the Lagunitas Club very quickly. Normally, it would take awhile, but they admitted service families. We both played tennis, so we enjoyed that, because we didn't have a court.

It was a pleasant place; again, a place I'd never talk politics, because there were very few other Democrats except the Kent family, and the Skewes-Cox family, who were sympatico.

About that time, the United World Federalists was forming. And Alan Cranston was the first head of it in California. I was on the steering committee for Marin County, and that's when I first met Cranston. This was something that a lot of the Republicans were interested in, too, so we used to have meetings at the Lagunitas Club.

Chall: They were interested in this?

Gatov: Yes. Marin has always had an interesting kind of Republican, to me. It still does.

[end Tape 2, side 2]

III CAREER GOALS AND POLITICS, 1946-1953
(Interview 3, December 1, 1975)
[begin Tape 3, side 1]

Developing a Sensitivity to Implications

Gatov: I'd like to tell you about some psychic experiences--one in particular--that I had, because it really has something to do with all the next period that's coming up.

Let me start with a disclaimer. [Laughs] I don't claim that I'm psychic, but I don't disbelieve in people having psychic perception. Sometimes it's happened to me. The most striking incident of it was the night before my second husband, Frank McCluer, was killed.

I had a dream in the middle of the night. He was standing beside what I took to be a female creature, all clad in glowing white with long, flowing hair. He had on his ordinary clothes, and he was speaking to me. He said, "I'm sorry, darling, but I'm going to have to leave you now."

I awakened very upset, needless to say, and I woke him up, and of course, he said, "That's perfectly ridiculous." I had nothing to hang it on to at all, but to me it was very real.

The next morning--he had a cold at the time, not a very severe one, but one of those sort of debilitating kinds--they telephoned for him after breakfast to fill in on one of the polo teams that day. I nearly had a fit, and did everything I could to persuade him not to, and to call them back and say that he wasn't well enough, and so on.

He wouldn't listen, and then as he was leaving, and I was crying and carrying on, he said, "What's the matter? Are you afraid you're going to be a widow?" And I said yes!

Gatov: Those were the last words we exchanged. I thought I'd get that in, because I pay attention to things like that.

Chall: You had told me the story of going to the psychic in Montreal, who told you to get away.

Gatov: Elsewhere. Almost anyplace else.

Well, I just had a feeling--to coin the cliché--that coming events cast their shadow before. I've become, I think, as I've grown older, more sensitive to the implications of things, and so the surprises, perhaps, are fewer than they might otherwise be.

Chall: But it's more than just seeing the implications of things?

Gatov: Well, it's funny. You develop a strong sense that this is going to happen. There was case of it in 1967, I guess. It had to do with Lyndon Johnson, his running for reelection in '68--I'll tell you about it. Oh, we don't get to that point. [Laughs]

Chall: [Laughs] Oh, we'll cover. We might cover some of that period rather rapidly, but we'll cover it. But just in case we forget it, why not tell it now.

Gatov: We were with some political friends in Bolinas in the summer of '67. The conversation was about LBJ. And without premeditation, I remarked that he wasn't going to run. Of course, no one agreed with me. Later, when he made that T.V. speech in March '68, I knew he was going to announce that he wasn't going to run. He did, at the very end of it. Only Al, my husband, remembered our conversation in the summer.

Chall: Very interesting story.

Today we're concentrating on your entrance into politics, going back to the place I think we were finishing last week.

The war had ended, and your husband was in business.

Gatov: I was involved in a lot of community activities in Marin County, and my children were growing up. We didn't have very much money at that time, and I thought, "Well, the time has come that I really can go back to work." I've always had sort of informal household arrangements with people, who might perhaps have a job on the outside, and they'd come in and live with us.

It's never been too much of a pressure. I've always been able to work out something that was not expensive, but was highly beneficial to me. So I had one of those situations at this time. I had a mother and her little boy. He was the same age as my son, and they were both going to school. So I had time.

Chall: Was that a live-in mother?

Gatov: Yes. She had just come back from Japan, and brought her little boy with her. Her husband was still there. She'd been interned all during the war.

Chall: Was your little boy going to private school or public school at that point?

Gatov: He started going to private school. He went to sort of a pre-nursery school at Dominican Convent, where Janie had gone as an elementary student. Then he went to kindergarten, and then went into first grade in the Kentfield School, right straight through the public school system of Kentfield.

All I knew was that I didn't want to do any of the things that I had done before, and as I think I told you, I started a dress shop, but I'd sold it by this time.

Chall: You mean in Kentfield?

Gatov: In Kentfield.

Chall: Is that so? No, you didn't tell me that. [Laughs] I think we left off with United World Federalists.

Gatov: This was rather preceding that. Toward the end of the war--it wasn't quite 1945. Another woman who lived near me in Larkspur (where we were then living) and I, decided we'd open a dress shop. Our husbands, who were both in the navy, thought this was a fine idea.

So we found a place in Kentfield, sort of a remodeled barn near the fire station there, and went about trying to find out how you get into the dress business. [Laughs] If we had known anything about the dress business, we never would have picked that particular time to do it, because clothes were allocated then on a quota basis, and if you'd been a customer of somebody the year before, the year before that, then you got this much of however much you ordered.

So we were competing madly for about two per cent of the available stock! [Laughs] However, we opened, and it went along really quite well, and it's still going. It's moved its locale, because the building was torn down, but it's still there. It's in Larkspur now.

Chall: Under the name that you chose for it?

Gatov: Yes, the Ross Valley Shop. We got a little sign made for it that said, "Country Clothes." Must be still making money for somebody.

Chall: Well, was it making money for you, the two of you?

Gatov: No great huge sums, but it was worth it. I discovered I didn't like the dress business. [Laughs] At all! I'd done it before, selling dresses, but I really just didn't care for it. I wasn't that interested in it.

So I thought I'd try to find something that I was interested in, and a friend of mine told me about a vocational guidance center, I think it was called, which was run by U.C. Extension. It was then on Powell Street, in the location that finally became the porno art spot [Museum of Erotic Art], about halfway up Powell.

Anyway, I went down, after having had lunch with this friend, and went in to find out what they did. I discovered that this particular program was run by three psychologists. It involved fifteen hours of testing, and then analysis, and then they did not offer to find you a job, but they offered to tell you where such jobs as you might be qualified for were available in the Bay Area. It was, I think, \$40 at the time, which was not bad for fifteen hours, at today's prices!

Roger Kent's Primary Campaign, for Congress, 1948

Gatov: So I signed up and started the next week, and went in every day for three hours and took these tests. Finally, it was over, and it was over just about the time that I picked up a copy of the local paper, the Independent-Journal, and saw that Roger Kent had announced that he was going to run for Congress. This was in the spring, I would say, probably March, of 1948.

I knew Roger and Alice. Not very well, but we were in the same carpool. They had children the same age as my daughter, and we lived very near them, about a block and a half. They'd been to our house, and though we weren't close friends, at least we knew each other.

I thought, well, you know--he's a Democrat, and I'm a Democrat, and everything I read about him sounded fine, so I thought, really, I'm not doing anything. I'll just offer and see if I can help.

So I called up, and Alice, his wife, answered the phone. She said, "I was just about to call you and ask you to come here tonight to a meeting." I thought that was a little odd, but I said "Fine."

Gatov: I went to the meeting, and there were about fifteen people in their living room. I'd never seen any of them before. They were all people who were involved in Marin County politics at that time.

One of them came up, and sort of shook my hand, and said, "Well, I hope you know what you're getting into!" I hadn't any idea what he was talking about! [Laughs]

Roger went around the room and introduced everybody and said what they would be doing in his campaign. He said that I was going to be his women's chairman.

Chall: Without even asking you!

Gatov: I nearly slid off the sofa. So then I got some more commiseration. [Laughs] The county chairman had identified himself. I asked if I could call him the next day and get the names of some women who were active in politics in Marin. He blithely said, "Sure."

Anyhow, I learned that night that the First Congressional District, which it was at that time, took in eleven counties, all the way up to the Oregon border, and deeply into the Valley. Marysville was in it, and Yuba City, and Colusa [laughs], and Glenn County. It was an enormous district.

Chall: Did it have any part of San Francisco in it?

Gatov: No. It stopped at the Golden Gate Bridge.

Roger's father had represented that district for quite a few years, until he retired in about the middle 1920s, I think, to run for the Senate. Roger had had no particular connection with it. There was a Democrat already in the race, who was very far to the left, and presumed, in those days, to have some Communist connections.

Chall: Already in Congress, a representative from the first district?

Gatov: No, already in the race. The incumbent was retiring--Clarence Lea, who lived in Santa Rosa. This other candidate's name was Sterling Norgard, and he had a pear orchard, as I recall, in Ukiah.

So the Marin County group had decided that they were going to see if they couldn't find a candidate, and somebody who didn't know Roger I believe, didn't know him personally at all--said, "What about William Kent's son, Roger? I think he's just back from the navy." [Laughs] He was. It hadn't been too long.

Gatov: They went over to see him, and apparently a couple of them took him on a trip through part of the district--which he considers to have been a disaster. I wasn't there, and I don't know about it. I'll leave that to his papers.

When he came back, however, he did decide to run. So they used a room in the back end of the house near the kitchen as the office. That was fine for me, because it was so close to home. We ordered telephones, and rented desks, and equipped the place with what we thought a political office ought to have. Filing cabinets and a mimeograph machine.

I called the chairman of the county central committee, whom I'd met the night before, and I asked him if he would give me the names of some women. I had my pencil poised, and there was a long silence, and he finally gave me the names of two. He said that was all he could think of.

So I tried to track down the two. One of them had left the county, and the other one was in a mental hospital! [Laughs] We were really starting from scratch.

In those days, of course, there was crossfiling, and Marin County was a very Republican county at that time, though it's a Democratic county today. Roger, himself, I presume was quite well known. Certainly the Kent family was very well known in the county.

It seemed like a breeze at the time, from there, for that particular part of the district, because Republicans as well as Democrats were quite willing to participate in a campaign, and make modest contributions. There wasn't any big money forthcoming.

But the rest of the district was something else, because none of us had any connections whatever there, and it was a matter of trying to organize as we went along. The only way you could cover the district was in a car, going up and down [highway] 101 and then off into the Valley, turning right in Lake County. [Laughs] It took days and days to do it.

He had a professional named Joe Paul, who is now deceased, and Joe was a p.r. press sort of person, who'd had some experience. I don't remember just in what capacity, but he'd had some.

Chall: In campaigns?

Gatov: Yes, I think so. He was the one to whom we turned, [laughs] when we wanted advice, so he must have had some experience.

Gatov: Everything seemed chaotic. Nothing's changed, actually! [Laughs] But I didn't know that at the time! [Laughs] I had one yellow pad full of notes of every telephone conversation that I took, and eventually I got what everyone gets in a campaign--a very sore ear!

We hoped that we were making headway. What we didn't count on was what happened. Crossfiling we understood merely intellectually, but I don't think we'd ever had any experience with it, and I don't think we really understood what was going on. Roger's problem was that he was too popular with the Republicans and not sufficiently so with the Democrats.

One of the rules of crossfiling was that you had to win your own party's nomination in order to survive. So Roger wound up with the greatest total number of votes, but too many Republican votes, which had come from Marin County, which went for him overwhelmingly. It was a bitter blow to him, I'm sure, because I don't think it was something that any of us had expected. He didn't win the nomination of the Democratic party.

Norgard had made sufficient inroads in the rest of the district. He'd been at it for some time and he was a farmer, not a city lawyer. Vincent Hallinan, as I recall, was part of his campaign structure.

Chall: Was that the Independent Progressive Party?

Gatov: Yes. Well, he had their endorsement, but he declined to say that he was part of it. It was a very messy situation politically, in those days. Very complicated, and we suspected people, and I guess they suspected you, too. There was never any way you could get rid of this Communist business. I imagine it's gone now.

Anyhow, Vincent Hallinan at that time was presumed to be very left-wing. There were some other people backing Norgard who admittedly had been members of the Communist party. The Daily Worker, which I believe is still published on the west coast--as I recall, we subscribed to it for the duration--was very hot for Norgard.

He got the Democratic nomination, and Hubert Scudder, who had been in the state legislature from Sonoma County--Sebastopol--got the Republican nomination.

Chall: Norgard got the Democratic nomination?

Gatov: Yes, because he had more Democratic votes than Roger did, and Scudder had more Republican votes than Roger did, while Roger's combined total, Republican and Democratic, was bigger than either of theirs.

Gatov: Eventually, I learned how I got into the campaign. [Laughs] There wasn't time, really, to ask, except that I finally met, in the course of it, a man named Lauriston Tardy, who was the head of the psychology department, as I recall, at San Rafael High School.

He had been one of the three psychologists who had run the testing center. I hadn't met him. My counselor had been somebody else. Laurie, apparently, about the time that all this was going on, or about to go on, was looking over the folders of people at the testing center. He saw the Marin County address--Kentfield--so he picked up the file and read it.

According to his story after that--he was on the county central committee, which was engaged in hunting for a candidate. At a meeting with Roger, before he announced he would run, Laurie said, "Do you know somebody named Smith on Rancheria Road?" and Roger said "yes." Laurie said, "Well, you call her and get her into your campaign. She's not doing anything at the time, I know." [Laughs]

Roger said, "Why?" and Laurie said, "Don't bother me with silly questions. You just ask her. She'll probably do it, and you'll be glad." So that's why, as I was about to call Alice to offer to lick postage stamps, I was suddenly invited to be the women's chairman.

Laurie and I laughed about it many times, how by such curious interweavings of circumstance things occur.

Well, the next event politically--

Chall: Could we back up just a bit so that you can fill me in on something. You didn't demur when you were announced as the chairman of the women?

Gatov: No, I'd come prepared to offer my services. This was the service that was requested.

Chall: Did you travel all over the eleven counties getting women to help with the campaign?

Gatov: Not very much. As I recall, I took one tour through. The rest of the time I spent on the telephone, and didn't go up through the district again until the very end, as I recall, and then just to Eureka.

Chall: What did you do with women, or for women?

Gatov: I was calling, calling, calling. Well, I wasn't doing anything special with women.

Chall: Did you find any women?

Gatov: Yes, I did. A surprising number of them are still active politically today. We're all very close friends. [Laughs]

Chall: They were active at that time?

Gatov: No, they hadn't been, but they got into this. They were people that I knew socially, and went skiing with, and things like that.

Chall: The Marin County group.

Gatov: That was the Marin County group, and they're still at it. [Laughs] Becky Watkin was one of them. It's been said of her, by those who analyzed election returns, that if she heads up your campaign in a primary, you win that county in the primary. That has generally happened. She's very active.

Another is a woman named Nancy Strawbridge, who's now Nancy Jewel. She's running Pete Stark's [Congressman Fortney Stark] office. Before that, she was executive secretary to Stanley Mosk when he was attorney general. Before that, she'd run his campaign. Before that, she'd run a U.S. senatorial campaign for Dick Richards in 1956.

Another is a woman named Nancy Swadesh, who has done a tremendous amount. She ran the campaigns of Congressman Clem Miller and others in Marin, and then went into state government. She's now involved, at the top or near the top, in the community college systems headquarters. You'd find her at U.C. Extension, in San Francisco.

Chall: These are women who started with you?

Gatov: Yes. This was the first campaign for all of us.

Chall: A good start.

Gatov: There was a woman named Vera Schultz, who by then was, I think, a member of the city council in Mill Valley, and later became a supervisor [Marin County]. She was very helpful.

I mentioned Jean Holmer, who later became president of the California League of Women Voters. She was very helpful. We had quite a lot going, and I tried to get this kind of caliber of people, really, in some of the other counties, and it was much more difficult, because we didn't have much time. We were very late getting started.

Chall: Just time to file and go?

Gatov: Just about.

Chall: And you had to win the primary?

Gatov: You had to win the primary. And so, it was a frantic business.

Chall: Six weeks or so.

Gatov: It was dreadful.

Chall: Well, now you had your taste. [Laughter]

Gatov: Yes, I had my taste. In those days, the nominee--now how did that work? The nominee of the party is the one who gets the appointments to the state central committee.

Chall: So that would have been Norgard.

Gatov: That would have been Norgard, but somehow or other, Roger got appointments. I don't know how. I'll have to figure this out somehow or other.

In any case, he had three appointments--himself, well, four counting himself. A man, and two women, because this is the way the state central committee is put together, as you know. I was one of the two women.

Chall: Who was the other one? Do you know?

Gatov: I'm trying to think. I don't recall.

Chall: Probably one of these you have just mentioned?

Gatov: It was one of that group, I think. Anyhow, off we went to Sacramento for the state convention, which took place in August, as I recall. I'd never even been to Sacramento before. At that time, the state convention for the Democrats was held in the senate chamber, which is the smaller of two chambers.

Though there were supposed to be about seven hundred people who were members of the state central committee, there weren't more than about 150 at the convention. Of the 150, there were about three leaders. One of them was Bill Malone, who was just going out as either Northern California chairman or state chairman, as I recall. I'm not absolutely certain about that, but I believe so.

Gatov: In any case, we had fifty-five votes in the First Congressional District, and we rounded them up, and we decided that we were going to back George Miller, Jr., the state senator from Contra Costa County, who had been helpful to Roger in the campaign.

Ed Heller had also been helpful to him [Roger]. The way Ed made contributions in those days was that if you were a candidate for federal office--he was more interested in federal office than he was in the state offices, as I recall--you just made an appointment, and went in and saw him, and talked to him, and probably emerged with a check.

Really, I hope that somebody who knows far more about it than I do, can describe the contribution that that man made to candidates, when things were very very difficult. He was quite independent of Bill Malone, even though the public often, I think, thought that they were together.

Ed was no dictator at all. If he liked what you stood for, and thought you were a decent sort of person, it always seemed to me that he was willing to make these contributions in order to encourage you, not in order to get you to do what he wanted you to do. He was truly a generous-hearted and generous-spirited man, who never asked anything, as far as I was able to determine, of anybody.

Including Roger, who was not in a position, at that time, to do anything, but he later was. Anyway, I think, I know Roger put a lot of his own money into it. I think around \$20,000 of his own, his mother's, and his various brothers and sisters all of whom contributed.

It seemed as though it should have been enough, but he was charged by the Norgard people with being sort of a playboy--a wealthy young man, the son of a wealthy, land-owning family, whose wife came from Honolulu, and he spent his time, so the story went, lying on Waikiki Beach, and this would be what you would expect. A playboy--he played tennis, and he had a swimming pool. Well, you could just see the picture! [Laughs] Anyway, he lost.

So we went to the convention, and as I say, the First Congressional District decided that they were going to back George Miller, Jr.

Chall: And they had fifty-five votes. How did they--the First Congressional District...?

Gatov: Eleven counties. That's where they got the votes. The county chairmen, you see, and then the in lieu votes for the state senate. If that seat was not up, the county committee had an appointment for the in lieu state senator.*

Do you know what I mean by that? The odd and even districts come up at different two-year intervals, so that only half the state senate is up each time.

So in the district where no candidate was up for election, the county committee just arbitrarily took that appointment. The incumbent state senator, whether he was yours or not, didn't have any say about it. The committee just did it. Particularly if the incumbent was a Republican, which most of them were then. In those days, when the cows were outvoting the people, practically, in all those fifty counties of northern California, you had a whole lot of votes. And each county chairman had a vote as well. In those days the north could outvote the south, if it stayed united. I think that a couple of the smaller counties in the north were combined, but by and large, they each had a seat. So that's why we got so many votes.

This was very disturbing to the powers that were, and Bill Malone didn't like it at all. You weren't supposed to do this kind of thing. What they had were pockets full of proxies, and they would try to get our proxies, and we were so new and so dumb, we didn't know what they were really trying to do. [Laughs]

Chall: Really?

Gatov: Well, we were not going to give them our proxies, but decided to go to the convention and see what happened! We were all new, and why not go?

Chall: How did you all know about George Miller, Jr., who came from Contra Costa County?

Gatov: Because he had come across the bay and taken an interest in Roger's campaign. I think he probably steered some contributions to him. In any case, he was interested, and so was Don Bradley, who is now running the Moscone campaign [for mayor of San Francisco].

*For an explanation of how this complication of the California law functioned at that time, see Dean R. Cresap, Party Politics in the Golden State, The Haynes Foundation, Los Angeles, 1954, pp. 41-42.

Chall: What was he doing at that time, Don Bradley?

Gatov: He was running Shelley's--Congressman Jack Shelley's--office in San Francisco. He'd been involved. I think he started in Shelley's election, which I believe had been the year before, '47 to fill a vacancy when the incumbent died. I think he got George Miller into that, and he and George worked very closely together. I think that's how it all came about.

So that was '48. We were quite exhilarated, really, by the whole experience, and shocked, too, but interested. We left feeling we understood the mechanics of how this worked.

Chall: You talked about we?

Gatov: I'm talking about Roger and myself, and whoever else was with us.

Then, the end of that summer, after I got back, was the time when I applied for the job at the Independent-Journal.

Chall: I see. Did that come about through what your testing revealed to you?

Gatov: Well, the testing told me things that were absolutely unbelievable. [Laughs] As I recall, one of the men who analyzed my score said, "If there was a woman's spot for a woman's head of General Motors, you ought to be it," and other such encouraging things, "You at least ought to be president of a college." Very flattering but impractical. There were no openings, and I didn't have the qualifications.

Chall: You weren't interested in a dress shop, and turning it into a Sears Roebuck of country dress shops or something. [Laughs]

Gatov: Oh, I was just flattered with all these allusions. Nice for one's ego. But as I said, I had decided I wanted to do something that I hadn't done before, and I was beginning to realize that I needed to find satisfaction in a job, to feel that the job itself was worth doing, in spite of the fact that I was going to get paid for it.

Perhaps it was because I'd been a volunteer so much, though I'd had other paid jobs. By this time, I really was quite determined to do something that was rewarding in itself.

Chall: The way volunteer work was?

Gatov: Yes. I enjoyed it, or I wouldn't have done it. I did feel that I was doing something that was useful.

So I went over to see Mr. Brown--Roy Brown.

Reporter on the San Rafael Independent-Journal

Chall: At the Independent-Journal?

Gatov: He was the publisher of the Independent-Journal.

Chall: Was there an opening there that you knew about?

Gatov: No.

Chall: Oh, I see. You just decided to take a try?

Gatov: I just called up to make an appointment. He knew who I was by that time, because I'd been in on account of the Kent campaign with press releases, which they rarely printed. But we were acquainted, and he was very pleasant. He said that the only thing they had open was assisant to the society editor. He told me the pay, which was ridiculous, but I took it. I took it with the provision that he would give me the first opening on the editorial side, which he agreed to do. They hadn't had any women reporters up to that time, except in the society department, but he said it was perfectly all right with him. He had no feelings against having a woman reporter.

But just to try me out, he said, "Why don't you go down to the Scudder meeting in Mill Valley tonight and cover that story, and bring it back, and if we like it, we'll use it. We'll see how you do."

Chall: Scudder was running for the--?

Gatov: Scudder was running for Congress, and he was just back from the Republican convention, and shocked me by calling for the impeachment of Harry Truman, who had been just nominated at the Democratic convention. This was in the middle of the campaign. The Republicans had decided that Truman ought to be impeached, he said--for a variety of pretty flimsy reasons, I thought.

Chall: Was this at their national convention?

Gatov: He had just come back from that.

Chall: And this was one of their decisions?

Gatov: He was giving their report, or his report on their activities.

Gatov: Well, I covered the meeting, and took it back to the paper, and it was placed on the front page the next day! They didn't alter a word. I didn't say anything about his calling for the impeachment of Harry Truman. I didn't think it was news. I thought it was just something libelous. [Laughs] So I omitted it, and nobody called to say I'd left it out!

Anyway, he decided that I knew how to write a news story, so pretty soon I showed up for the assistant to the society editor job. The society editor had been there for years and years and years. Her name was Florence Donnelly, and she was, among other things, deeply involved in the Marin Historical Society, and spent a lot of time writing historical pieces. She knew most of the old Marin County families quite well.

I learned a great deal from her, but after I'd been there only two weeks, she got some frightful kind of virus and was gone for the next three weeks, so I had all these pages to fill. The men in the shop just saved my life, because there wasn't anybody who had time in the editorial room to show me how to do this. I didn't know how to write headlines or count spaces. I didn't know anything!

So I went out to the shop, and they showed me what to do, and worked with me those three weeks. I'd send things down, and they'd send them back for corrections, but without embarrassing me by letting it go to the editorial side, you know, where it would be quite obvious that I had no idea what I was doing.

They really were marvelous. So by the end of the three weeks, I had learned, really, a tremendous amount, and was very full of the newspaper business. I just thought it was great! [Laughs] I could hardly wait for somebody to get fired, or leave, so I could get to the editorial side. Eventually that did happen.

Jack Craemer was the managing editor, son of Roy Brown's partner, whose name was Justus Craemer; these two men had bought the paper in 1938, I believe, something like that, just about the time the Golden Gate Bridge was to open. It turned into an absolute gold mine. It was even then, when I was there.

Chall: The only paper in the area?

Gatov: Well, there was another one, the Journal, which expired shortly after, about six months, I guess, after I went on. A woman from that paper was also hired by the I-J.

Chall: What did the word "Independent" mean in the Independent-Journal? Was it originally different from the Journal?

Gatov: It became the Independent-Journal. It was the San Rafael Independent at the time I went to work on it. The morning Journal was a competing paper.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Gatov: Then, when it folded, the Independent bought something and changed its name to the Independent-Journal, and it's been that for twenty-five years, so that's why I keep referring to it as that. Actually, it was the San Rafael Independent at the time I went to work for it.

Chall: So you eventually went into the news department, the editorial side?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: How long were you on the society desk?

Gatov: I don't think it was more than two or three months. Pretty fast, really.

Chall: Isn't there a trick to writing a newspaper article that one generally has to learn? How did you happen to pick it up so fast?

Gatov: It's very simple. You just read a story, and if you're interested in finding out how they do it, it hits you. You get the who, what, where, when, and why or how into the first paragraph, which is very different from the British system, and I guess many other countries. I was particularly struck by it when we were in London, where you have to read the whole story to get the news--the real news, which often is in the last paragraph.

We oblige our readers betters. [Laughs] You just read the first couple of paragraphs and you've got the sense of the story, and then the details follow. It's just a trick of writing.

Chall: But you had that trick already in mind when you started out?

Gatov: Well, I'd been writing some press releases for Roger, and as I mentioned, I'd been close to some people who had a paper in North Carolina, and I'd gotten to write editorials. Of course, that was quite different.

I'd been interested in newspapers, I guess is a way of putting it, so it was not a strange kind of assignment.

Election Night, 1948

Gatov: Oh! I must tell you about election night, 1948. By this time, I was on the news side, so it must have been pretty fast, if I went to work in August, and this was November.

Brown and Craemer decided that because I was the only admitted Democrat on the staff, they would let me have the evening off. Everybody else had to come back to the paper and answer telephones and give election returns, because of course, the local races were going on too, so newspapers--small-town ones particularly--normally did do that before the day of television.

So I went off, and the Kents were having a dinner party of all the people who had worked in the campaign. It was a glorious reunion, though we really came prepared to have a wake, just sort of "Wasn't it wonderful?" "Wouldn't it have been great?" sort of feeling. [Laughs]

We had a radio going, and just before we went in to dinner, we could hear some vaguely optimistic reports coming in about Truman. Nobody believed them, of course, so we went in to dinner. The Kent's dining room is something that, really, you couldn't believe if you didn't see it.

Roger was one of seven children, and I gather they were a very convivial family. The main table in the big part of the dining room, is a twenty-four foot long redwood slab, that is beautiful. It's as wide as the normal width of a dining room table, but this solid twenty-four foot slab seats a great many people.

Chall: He was living in the family home then, I take it?

Gatov: I forgot to mention that. Yes. He and Alice bought it, finally, from his mother, who had been living in it. She moved into one of the smaller houses. There were four or five or six, maybe, Kent houses built around the main old white house. She moved into one called New Haven. It was well-named; it's a very New England sort of house.

She was getting older, and decided that the house was too much for her. Roger and Alice had three children growing up, so it seemed like a sensible deal to make, I guess.

Chall: So you were all sitting around that beautiful table?

Gatov: Having a marvelous time! And finally, somebody, about the end of dinner, got up and went back in the living room to see what was going on, and said, "Truman is elected!!" [Laughs] We couldn't believe it! So we went pouring out to the living room to listen for a while, and then everybody went home, feeling so euphoric--it was great.

I was so euphoric that I decided not to go home, but to go over to the Independent.

Chall: And gloat! [Laughs]

Gatov: Well, I wasn't going to gloat, exactly. I was just going to show up, all smiles. There was Mr. Brown running the telephone switchboard, himself. [Laughs] Everybody else had gone home and left him. He taught me pretty fast how to run the switchboard, and said that he was going over to the courthouse, to take calls for local returns. About two o'clock in the morning, he phoned me and said, "Lock that thing up and come over here."

So I went over, and everybody in the courthouse--the courthouse people there were then all Republicans--and they had the radio going. I didn't say a word, I really didn't. [Laughs] I didn't have to. They were so gloomy and so depressed.

Chall: They must have been just in shock.

Gatov: They were.

Chall: Because it was so unexpected.

Gatov: It was a very unexpected thing.

Chall: It's one thing to be disappointed when your candidate doesn't win when you're not really sure, [laughs] but it's another thing to be shocked when you were absolutely positive that your candidate will win.

Gatov: So he would call off the local returns and I'd write them down. I guess we wound up around six o'clock, and I went home to bed, feeling just fine about the state of the world.

[end Tape 3, side 1, begin Tape 3, side 2]

Chall: How was your husband feeling about your plunge into politics at this point?

Gatov: He was quite cooperative. Ultimately, he got bored with it, but at this point, he thought very highly of it. He was a Democrat too. But because of his hearing, and he was in business and so forth, he really wasn't involved in that kind of thing. He was really interested is the only way I could put it. It was not one of our problems.

Chall: So the fact that you stayed out all night--?

Gatov: I came home and left him a note and told him that I was going over. He had been at the dinner, as I recall. Yes, I know he'd been at the dinner. So we came home, and then I said, "I'm going over to the paper."

Chall: That was okay?

Gatov: It didn't matter.

Chall: Then you continued working on the paper?

Gatov: I continued working on the paper, and they made me feature editor finally, which I enjoyed very much. They had a magazine supplement that came out on Saturdays, so there was less pressure than there was as a reporter, a daily reporter, a general reporter.

Chall: Were you responsible for the features?

Gatov: Either for writing them or getting them, having them done. I learned a great deal about long-range planning for such things, that it doesn't always work.

Because they were interested in promoting housing, and the whole real estate business in Marin County, and particularly home building, I used to find interesting houses through architects that I knew, who were mostly Democrats. This is how I came to know them. Architects as a group are normally Democrats, and a number of them had been in Roger's campaign.

There was a lot of very exciting new construction going on, so I'd get the photographer, and we'd go take photographs of some of these exciting houses. I'd write the story to describe the house. I loved it. It was very, very nice. I tried to organize the paper, get it into the Newspaper Guild.

Chall: Is that right?

Gatov: I started by joining the guild. A friend of mine had a similar job to mine with the Chronicle, on the This World section, which was sort of new in those days. I knew what he was getting paid, and I was getting paid exactly half, and it was not because the poor Independent-Journal was starving. [Laughs]

Chall: Was it because you were a woman?

Gatov: No, just their whole pay scale was low. I don't think I was paid any less than any of the other reporters, but nobody was paid very much, except the editor and a couple of the others. And as Roy Brown explained to me when I complained one day; he said, "I don't regard this as a career paper for more than just a few people. This is training-ground paper. I expect people to get their training here. We pay them while they're learning, and then they can go on into the City," [San Francisco] (In those days there were four papers in the City), "and go on to someplace else." This way, they could keep their salaries low. So I joined the guild, and I tried to organize the editorial room.

Chall: And how were you met?

Gatov: Well, they were interested, but scared.

Chall: They really were? They were afraid that if they joined the union that they would be fired?

Gatov: Lose their jobs, yes. Of course, the shop was organized. They thought that we were idiots to work for what we worked for. They were getting much better paid than we were. Well, it didn't work. I just couldn't pull it off. Well, all that happened was I failed.

Chall: He didn't fire you for trying, did he?

Gatov: No, he didn't fire me for trying. I guess he knew I wasn't going to make it. [Laughs] He talked to the others. They never told me. But some of them were young men who'd just married, or they'd just had a baby or something. There was no hostility about it. I understood their situation. I was fortunate. If he'd fire me, it wouldn't have been the end of my world.

Chall: They may have looked on it as a training ground too. I mean, they may have said, "Okay, we'll just go on from here."

Gatov: Well, most of the good ones did. They did move on, to where they could get better pay.

Chall: Well, that's an interesting experience, though. So you met some labor leaders along the way?

Gatov: Yes. I'd already met some, of course, in the course of Roger's campaign. So I learned a little bit in that process. Everything went along rather tranquilly, as I recall. I don't remember anything unusual occurring until 1952.

The Campaigns of 1950

Chall: Excuse me, there was a 1950 campaign for Roger Kent, too.

Gatov: Yes. What am I thinking of?

Chall: And Helen Gahagan Douglas?

Gatov: And Helen Douglas.

Roger had asked me if I would come back and do his campaign. He had been, really, very properly sponsored this time by the Democrats in the district. They were wanting him to run. There wasn't anybody else. They held an endorsing sort of convention, except you weren't allowed to call it that, in those days. But they got people together, and he was sort of urged to run by acclamation, as I recall.

He was anxious to. This was early, like February, so I think I left some time in the spring. I didn't go into his campaign immediately, but about springtime I think I did.

Chall: Did you quit the paper?

Gatov: Yes, I had to quit the paper. I couldn't possibly do both. They were really very nice to me, and said, "Well, if you want to come back, just let us know."

But I got a little disenchanted with the paper, because in that 1950 campaign particularly, it seemed to me that they were frightfully unfair. Of course, by this time Scudder was the incumbent congressman, which was their excuse. But they really blacked out Roger completely, and just wouldn't run anything.

I remember going over to the manager of the radio station, muttering something about the FCC and equal time to him, and was then able to get some spots on that we had paid for, but it took that kind

Gatov: of pressure. I remember wondering then about the propriety, really, of a newspaper or a radio station being completely private enterprise, because they were such important factors in a community, and had no competition, in this sense.

Chall: They weren't owned by the same person were they?

Gatov: Yes, they were. As Roy Brown once said to me, "I'll endorse any good candidate, as long as he's a Republican." [Laughs] He was very candid about it. This was the way he believed.

I remember one time there had been a very unpleasant event. I can't recall what it was that triggered it, but in any case, he was telling me about his days as a younger man, when he lived in the Valley someplace, and I think, owned a small newspaper there. There was a vigilante movement, and he was part of it, and one night they came along to get him to go with them on this particular ride, and he couldn't go for some reason. The man who went in his place was killed. The moral of the story was not that there was anything wrong with these night riders doing whatever it was they were doing to people who were trying to organize the farm workers, as I recall, but that it was dangerous. You can get hurt doing that! [Laughs]

And yet I was fond of the man himself, because in his own way, and according to his lights, he was a generous, paternalistic kind of person. He told me that the man who was killed in his place had left a little boy. Roy Brown and his wife sent the widow, I forget how much money each year, and they sent the boy to college. In other words, they took over. They had this sense of obligation, and, I guess, conscience.

By this time, I had a feeling that, you know, there was more. There was more if I could just find it. [Laughs] I wasn't feeling restless, particularly, but I didn't mind leaving particularly, either.

Chall: What spot did they put you into in this campaign? Were you women's chairman again?

Gatov: No, that was the one and only time I ever had that title in politics. I forget what I was. Organization chairman or something like that. I had a fine resounding title at the top of the stationery. [Laughs]

I got busy again. It was much easier this time, because of course, we had something on which to build, and we had Joe Paul back again. It seemed like a fine time for us.

Gatov: The Helen Douglas campaign was starting. Jimmy Roosevelt was running for governor at that same time. Jimmy made a few speeches that I heard, and I thought they were singularly unimpressive.

I don't recall exactly the date that the Korean War broke out, but I believe it had broken out by this time, spring. I also believe that Senator Joe McCarthy had started his crusade in West Virginia, in February of 1950, as I recall.

Anyway, Jimmy Roosevelt had a plan that in order to evacuate Californians, who would certainly be in danger of attack if anything serious occurred over there, we would all move to Nevada.

Chall: All of us?!

Helen Gahagan Douglas

Gatov: And he had [laughs] dreamy ideas like that, that really seemed pretty poor. So as a group, working on Roger's campaign, we had no interest in being affiliated with that one.

But Helen Douglas was something else. I had gotten to know her in the early part of the primary, before she even decided to run. I remember going into the City to a number of meetings, to meet her and hear her, and was enormously impressed. You remember there was a two-day symposium with members of Truman's cabinet. They really did this for her, I think, probably. I didn't know that then. It was a great sort of staging area, and she was very prominent in it.

I thought she was not only a beautiful, but supremely intelligent and articulate woman, who was quite unself-conscious about wearing glasses, I remember that. She'd take them off and put them on, [laughs] like the rest of us have to later. [Laughs] I was impressed because she seemed so unself-conscious about it, and almost used them as a tool to punctuate remarks.

I knew she'd been an actress, but that didn't seem to have anything to do with the impression that she gave. Contrary to some others like, well, George Murphy and Ronald Reagan, to mention two--I could never get away from the fact that they were acting.

Helen had so much feeling in her that it seemed to come flowing out, in a spontaneous way. Nothing seemed rehearsed or staged or arranged in any artificial way. But I also knew, by this time, that

Gatov: the powers that be--meaning Bill Malone, really--were not going to accept her. They were putting together a campaign for Manchester Boddy, who was a newspaper publisher, I believe, in southern California. He had been born in a log cabin, which was still deemed to be something of a political virtue.

They gave a free cocktail reception for Manchester Boddy in the Fairmont. I don't know how many people were there, but it seemed an absolutely immense crowd. I was told later that they'd spent \$10,000 on this cocktail party, just to come and meet him.

He wasn't much, just to start with, but from there on it was unimpressive, I thought. But I also was aware, from what he said in his speech that day, that he was going to attack Helen as a tool of the Communists and a voting partner of Vito Marcantonio, I think his name was.

Chall: So he did use that?

Gatov: Oh, yes! Indeed he did!

Chall: There are some who question whether the Democrats did it to Helen Douglas first.

Gatov: There's no question about it in my mind. From where I sat, that's what happened. So I remember having the gall to write her a letter and urge her not to run, because I was sure she was going to get licked.

Here she was, a member of Congress with a safe seat. She had a district that was just beautifully solid Democratic, that was never going to go against her, no matter how many ugly charges were made. We were going to lose the seat, possibly.

I didn't know much about Nixon at that time, but you could see the power of the Democratic party--what power there was, the money power, was not going to support her. I felt awful writing it and sending it, but I think it was still February. In other words, it wasn't too late.

I got in a terrible argument with a woman named Sue Lillienthal, who was a strong friend of hers, a strong supporter, and a generous contributor, I'm sure. Sue and I later got to know each other very well.

Helen didn't know me, and it obviously had no effect on her, but I just felt that this was my observation of the situation, and that she ought to know that it was going to be rotten.

Chall: Did you know where the Hellers stood at this time, or Mr. Heller?

Gatov: No.

Chall: When you talk about the money--

Gatov: I don't recall them involved in the Manchester Boddy thing. They may have been. Ed seldom went to things like this, like the cocktail party, for instance, that I mentioned. He didn't really like mob scenes. I don't remember whether Ellie was there or not. I guess she probably was.

Chall: She was national committeewoman at the time.

Gatov: She probably was there. Whether Ed met Boddy, I don't know.

Chall: I see. But you just had a feeling, then?

Gatov: I just had a feeling that whatever resources Bill Malone, particularly, could pull together would support him. Bill had been such a power over the Democratic party since 1932, that I thought he probably had quite a lot of resources. And of course, the press you knew wasn't going to support her.

Well, I never have been interested in the glorious defeat. It seems to me a futile thing to do. I don't think it's better to have made the race and lost in this sense. If you have a choice, if you're still doing something that's significant, which it seemed to me she was, and there was no chance of them getting her out of there, hopefully this mood would pass--the longer she stayed in Congress, the more she'd get known. It would be much easier for her eight years, ten years later.

I was in a minority situation. But I really was shocked, even afterwards, at the number of people who said that they were very glad she had run, because she had made a point. I guess she did make a point, but the sacrifice was terribly great, it seemed to me.

Chall: She sacrificed her whole political career.

Gatov: Well, maybe she's just as glad she did. I don't know, in a personal sense, whether she would have done it over again or not. I've seen her since, but I've never brought the subject up.

Chall: We'll probably find out in her memoirs.

Gatov: But that's where all of us were, emotionally, and in anything that we could do.

Chall: For Helen Douglas and Roger Kent.

Gatov: Well, and Earl Warren and Pat Brown.

Chall: Pat Brown was running for attorney general?

Gatov: Yes, he was running for attorney general. He and Warren were definitely running together. They didn't say so, but in those days, people were quite free to buy ads in the paper. All you had to do was sign a name at the bottom.

So the papers were frequently showing ads of "The Team For California," with Earl Warren on one side and Pat Brown on the other. They both won.

They were very kind to Roger and included him in all their first districts ads, so he won the primary quite handily. He did have an opponent, and I can't remember now if it was Norgard or not. I think it was. But in any case, he won the primary with no trouble.

Everything seemed to be going along beautifully. William O. Douglas had just returned from a trip to the Pacific, as I recall. He had been a professor of Roger's at Yale law school. They met and talked in San Francisco. This was at the time that Douglas was being urged maybe to think about running for president in '52, if Truman didn't run. People really didn't think Truman was going to, even then.

Anyhow, the admission of Red China to the United Nations was very much of a political issue, with the liberals wanting it and the conservatives not. At this time, we had General MacArthur saying, "The Chinese are never going into Korea." The Chinese, I guess, were saying they were never going into Korea too. Anyway, they marched just a few days before the election.

Chall: We were in the Korean War at that time.

Gatov: We were in the Korean War. The United Nations was presumably the mantle under which we were fighting. Maybe it was just the recognition of China--I guess it was, not the admission of it into the U.N.

Chall: Recognition by the United States?

Gatov: By the United States of the new Mao government. Roger had taken this position, along with a number of other people.

Chall: Of recognition?

Gatov: Yes. Five days before the election, the Chinese marched into North Korea. That was the end of that campaign! [Laughs] You wouldn't believe what happened in the headquarters. It started as soon as the word came out.

The Catholic church was very strong in that district and Roger had had great support from Catholics. They just kept calling, and calling, and calling, and calling, saying, "I'm sorry, I'm not going to vote for you." It seemed to be important to them that we know why they weren't going to. I don't recall that the Pope particularly said anything. He must have, I suppose.

In any case, it was the Catholic revulsion against anybody who wanted any business with the Red Chinese Communists. So that's what happened to Roger's second campaign.

Chall: That's what happened to Helen Douglas, too. It was the Korean War that helped in the defeat.

Gatov: Except that I think Richard Nixon was even more. I think that even if there hadn't been a war, he would have so undermined her. He did so undermine her. He created an environment of fear. I only saw him once in my life, and that was at a Pro-America meeting.

Pro-America, in those days, was a right-wing Republican women's organization. They had a little piece in the paper saying that Richard Nixon was going to be their guest at a public meeting--I forget where, someplace in San Rafael, in some hall--and the public was invited. So I decided to go and see what this creature was like.

Somebody from one of the unions and I were the only two non-members of Pro-America there. There were all done up, hats and gloves, looking very elegant. I was not, [laughs] and nor was the man from the labor union, but we got in.

I can still remember my reactions, seeing that young man then, of course, with a lot of dark hair, and his swarthy beard--he had that problem then, too. But without much imagination, you could turn him into a Nazi storm trooper. While I was looking at him, I could just see him with the S.S. on his collar and the high leather boots, and that whole uniform. He just, to me, belonged to the Nazis.

Chall: He emanated that?

Gatov: Oh! First, he terrified them, telling them all the dreadful things that were being fomented by Communists in this country, and of course, wrapping Helen Douglas into all of it, reciting--in very much the McCarthy way--her voting record. Nobody else had a copy of it, of course.



Gatov: [Mimicking his voice] "These are the votes that she cast along with Vito Marcantonio, who I believe has admitted that he was a Communist!" Or had been, or something.

Then he identified himself with the solution. [Mimicking] "Elect me, and I will help rid our country of Communist infiltrators." The whole bit. It was a terrifying thing.

Chall: And they all cheered?

Gatov: Oh, yes. I was shocked, and this other man--I never did know who he was--and I sort of looked at each other, and then we left after it was over.

But he was a stern, angry--frightening, to me--person. And you knew that he was going to win. There was nothing she could do to cope with this. The charges were so intangible, that the only comparison I could think of is "When are you going to stop beating your wife?" There's no way you can unsnarl yourself from it, if the charge can be built up to seem credible.

She was running out of money. It was a tragic thing.

Chall: Did she campaign in Marin County?

Gatov: Yes. She landed in a helicopter on the courthouse lawn, which in those days was a pretty heroic thing to do. It was a very skimpy little helicopter! [Laughs] She was very brave, indeed!

Chall: What kind of crowds did she gather?

Gatov: Only fair. We got to know George Miller again, in the course of that campaign, because he was running for lieutenant governor with Jimmy Roosevelt. He was around the county a good deal, too, and he would quite often go where she was, and hope that together they could generate some crowds, and sort of work together.

George, even then, was a pretty experienced pro, with a voice like a hog-caller. [Laughs]

Chall: Roosevelt's campaign, was probably not in too good shape, either.

Gatov: Roosevelt hadn't a chance, really, even if he'd been brilliant, which he wasn't in this campaign. To beat Earl Warren in 1950 would have been like beating God. He was a loved public figure, in a sense that I'm sure young people today can't imagine, feeling love for their government! [Laughs] They might be interested--or feel all kinds of

Gatov: other emotions--but not a real warmth and affection. Warren was so non-partisan. Crossfiling suited him perfectly. This was his third campaign. So by now he was sort of a father figure in the state.

Chall: So the Democrats were really cut to pieces in many ways?

Gatov: Oh, it was hopeless, absolutely hopeless. [Laughs]

Chall: The Chinese just shouldn't have marched when they did, I suppose! [Laughter]

Gatov: No! If it had been the day after the election--

Chall: You might have had a chance.

Gatov: The world might have been quite different.

Interestingly enough--I must add this little thing while I remember it. A man named Harold McGrath, who is now living in Santa Rosa, was the executive secretary for the Democratic State Central Committee. I went in about something or other, shortly after the election was over. He said, "Do you know that six women ran for Congress, including Helen running for the Senate? They all lost, and none of them sent a telegram of congratulations to their opponent." [Laughs] He couldn't wait to tell me that.

Chall: Oh, really?

Gatov: That's about what I said, "Oh really? Hmm." [Laughter]

Chall: Something you just had to learn! [Laughs]

Gatov: He said, "It's always done, but none of them did it!"

Chall: I see. Well, they just didn't have enough experience!

Gatov: So let's see. After that--

Chall: That's 1950, and Roger Kent, I guess, never tried again, did he?

Gatov: No. Not too long after that, he was appointed general counsel for the Defense Department by Truman. I don't recall the years, but it's in his material. He had a lot of correspondence about it, so we can look up the years.

So he and Alice took off and went to Washington, which they loved. He'd grown up there when his father was a member of Congress. They had a very happy time.

Gatov: Before this, before the fall campaign, was the Democratic State Central Committee convention in Sacramento--in August. Again we in the First Congressional District, decided that we wanted to support George Miller--this time for vice-chairman.

I can't recall now who the Malone forces were running, but it was somebody quite objectionable to us, we thought, so they withdrew him, and came up with a man named Fred Trott, as I recall. Trott sort of stopped us. He was from the southern part of the Valley, Visalia, and a mild-mannered man who didn't seem very threatening.

Even then, we had notions about how the party ought to be opened up. I don't know if they were articulated particularly, but this was just a feeling that we had, that there was something wrong about three people deciding who was going to do what in the Democratic party in northern California, just because they had pockets full of proxies.

Chall: And those three people were--?

Gatov: Well, one of them was Malone, and I wish I could remember who the other two were. I don't, because the other two pretty fast just disappeared from the scene, and Bill remained, and is still around doing things.

Then, I became co-chairman of our congressional district.

Chall: What kind of an organization is that, or is that just a title?

Gatov: The title gives you a license to call people together to a meeting, to discuss problems and candidates, potential candidates. The function, the elections code says, is that you're supposed to run the congressional campaign. Well, of course you don't. But you can be useful, if you've got active people in the different counties in the district. So that when you do get a candidate, you are able to say, "These are the people that probably will give you a hand," because a lot of them have been there and met the candidate. It gives you the freedom to function, if you want to.

Chall: And then you were on the state committee?

Gatov: Yes, and on the executive committee.

Chall: Who was your other "co-," do you recall?

Gatov: A man named Leonard Thomas. No, it was somebody from the valley counties. Leonard was later, because we got re-districted, and whoever it was got re-districted out of the district. I was left alone, and they took a vote. That's what Thomas did; he proposed that I just remain, and that they not bother with the other one.

Chall: Oh, I see. And 1950 was a re-districting year?

Gatov: Well, they took a census in '50, as is done every ten years, and after that, they re-district on the basis of the population. We were elected at a caucus at the state convention, a caucus of the delegates from the district. They get together and elect.

Roger Kent

Chall: Were the people who were working on Kent's campaign the same women and men as before in '48?

Gatov: Yes, but far more of them. By this time, he really had a good organization, throughout the district. As I say, everything really looked great, until after the Chinese crossed the border into South Korea, the roof fell in. It was the first of November, as I recall. Just that close to election day.

Chall: You felt quite confident that you would beat Mr. Scudder this time around?

Gatov: Oh, yes. We were really quite confident. Roger was being well received, and he had publicized the fact that he thought we ought to recognize China, for the same reasons that we ultimately did twenty years later.

Chall: Did he take a stand on issues like McCarthy?

Gatov: Oh, yes. He was very critical of McCarthy, and particularly critical of McCarthy for the terrible things that he said about General Marshall, whom Roger, I believe, knew, or had met. Roger was lucky in having a war record that was both spectacular and impeccable, and he had endorsements from half the top military brass, it seemed to me, so that he personally was never in danger of having the Communist brush rub off on him. His family background and so on--it just couldn't work against him.

I think he felt quite free, therefore, to take rather courageous stands for those times, and to be highly critical of the Communist witch hunt and so forth that was going on.

Chall: In a campaign like this, where one has to be very careful because of the way the opposition was treating these issues, did he make decisions about what he was going to say himself, or did you plan the campaign strategy?

Gatov: Well, we talked it over. This has always been a mysterious business, campaign strategy, to people who don't take part in it. There's really nothing very mysterious about it. It evolves. You just can't make a good candidate do something or be something that he isn't, naturally. Roger's a person of very strong convictions. The world is black or white, in his mind, and still is. There are very few grays. [Laughs]

He had strong convictions, and although you could tell him that it was an impolitic thing to do, he'd say, "William Douglas does it, I'll do it."

Chall: He knows his own mind.

Gatov: You couldn't possibly talk him out of a position he'd taken. I don't recall ever trying to talk him into positions. Generally, they were the reflections of most liberal Democrats of that time--and there was quite a distinction between the liberal Democrats and the not-liberal Democrats. There was the Manchester Boddy variety. We thought they were Republicans, really--why didn't they re-register and get out of our party and stop cluttering it up? We felt that most people would agree with us if they only knew. The rightness of our stand absolutely had to be clear!

Chall: And then, on the other hand, you had the Independent Progressive Party.

Gatov: Whom we had nothing to do with. There were certain litmus paper tests in those days, and one of them was whether or not you approved of Truman's policy on Turkey and Greece. I can't remember exactly what the policy was, but if you approved of it, you were one of our group, sort of the liberal Democrats. If you did not approve of it, you were IPP.

There were a couple of issues that had handy little touchstones that would help you recognize somebody's position, as you can today on a number of things. Issues that sort of tick themselves off, as a person goes down the line of the "laundry list," as we call it, of what they believe in, what the planks in their platform are.

Roger had made no secret of his feeling that you could not ignore a quarter of the world. Senator William Knowland to the contrary. Knowland, of course, was making a lot of sounds at that time too. The China Lobby was becoming recognized as a strong political influence. You remember that Knowland was called "the Senator from Formosa"? And didn't mind?

Chall: So you can come out of that campaign, I guess better organized, but in not too good shape?

Public Relations for the Red Cross and the Loyalty Oath, 1951

Gatov: Yes, much better organized.

So then I decided that I wanted another job. I didn't even think about going back to the Independent, I don't believe. I took a part-time job.

About this time the machine tool business that my brothers and I owned in Montreal had prospered to the point where it was able to pay some directors' fees. So every month I would get a check for about \$300, or something like that. It was enough to make a difference, in those days. It seemed considerable.

The Red Cross called and asked me if I would take over their public relations job, which meant one day a week. I was going to get paid as much for that one day as I had been paid on the I-J for a week! [Laughs] I said, "Yes, that would be lovely!" and happily settled into that. I'd been part of the Red Cross, and I believed in it very much; the work that it was doing at that time--I thought it was important.

Everything was going along swimmingly, and the Independent-Journal was very nice about printing puff pieces that I wrote about the Red Cross and how great it was.

Until the loyalty oath business came along. I don't remember whether this was state or federal. I guess it was federal, because otherwise it couldn't have affected the Red Cross. The Red Cross decided that all of its employees should sign a loyalty oath. The nervousness about Communists was that bad! This was too much for me, so I went to see Mrs. Kittle, Mrs. John C. Kittle, who was then the president of the Marin Red Cross, and had been the one who had gotten me into the Gray Lady program initially. She had known me for quite a few years by now, a lovely person.

I said I just thought this was a disgusting thing, and as a matter of principle, I wouldn't sign it, and therefore here was my resignation. She was very understanding about it. She was a Republican, but a very liberal Republican. She said, "I'm not at all sure I'd sign one, either, if I had to," but the volunteers were not included.

I think the thing that really teed me off more than anything was that about three weeks before this occurred, the minister of the Episcopal church which I'd been going to in San Rafael, a man named Noble Owings, had made a speech to the civil servants, I believe, who worked for the county--in other words, the career people who worked for the county--protesting loyalty oaths, and trying to encourage them to fight it.

Gatov: Within ten days after that, he was reassigned out of the church where he'd been about eight years, down to some remote spot in the Central Valley.

Chall: As quickly as that?

Gatov: This power was so strong. It was really a frightening, terrible thing. I was so angry, really, at the Episcopalians! I had talked this over with my husband, who agreed with me completely. He said, "You're one of the lucky ones. You don't have to do this. You can afford to stick to what you think you ought to do. You're not in a squeeze." So anyway, that ended my nice little job which I enjoyed very much.

Chall: You didn't have it very long, then.

Gatov: I think about a year, something like that.

Decision to Teach Political Science

Gatov: So that was about the time, spring or summer of 1952, that I began thinking seriously about what I viewed as the appalling apathy of people about government, letting these things happen, being such idiots as not to recognize Joe McCarthy for what he was. Somewhere in this period of '52, early '52, I remember I was visiting my mother in North Carolina. The New York Times came out with a story that a Gallup poll, just released that day, showed that fifty per cent of the American people believed Joe McCarthy's charges.

Well, that was shocking to me! [Laughs] So I stayed in a state of indignation, I guess, [laughs], for a while at least. I decided that if I thought these things, then I ought to do something about it. The best way to do something about it over a long period of time was to teach. You can see what an idealist I was. [Laughs] Marvelous what ignorance does for you. So I got my credits transferred from Michigan. I think I mentioned this part.

Chall: You did when we were having a conference, but it isn't on tape.

Gatov: Well, I got my credits transferred, and came over to see the head of the political science department here [University of California at Berkeley]. It was in that red building on the other side of the campanile, where his office was in those days. Red brick, as I recall. Pretty old. We talked, and I told him that I wanted to get a master's,

Gatov: and probably a doctor's in political science. He said, "Why?" And I said, that well, I had these feelings about people not knowing enough about their government, and not being interested, and I thought perhaps that I could do something about that.

He asked me if I'd looked at the names on the door as I came in, and I said I had, and he said, "You didn't see any women?" And I said no. "Very poor field for women," he said.

Chall: Don't try to crack it.

Gatov: Well, that was the implication. Sort of don't bother applying here, but I thought, there are other places to teach besides Berkeley. There are other schools, so I wasn't really disburbed. I'd pretty well charted my course when some friends from the East, from South Orange, New Jersey, Bob Redpath and his wife, came out and we invited some friends of theirs over for dinner. One of the friends of theirs who came turned out to be the assistant director of the Coro Foundation, a man named John Johnson, who is now director of the Palo Alto Medical Clinic. Bob Redpath had been and still is very much interested in semantics and that's how he knew Johnson. I also think he purposely had the Johnsons invited because he was interested, and thought I would be, in the Coro Foundation.

John and his wife Phyllis started to talk to me, and found out what I was going to do, and asked if I had ever thought about the Coro Foundation. Well, of course I hadn't. I'd never even heard of it. He said he thought they might have a vacancy in the internship and if they did, would I come in and talk to him about it. "We'll set up an interview for you." This was August. The program started in September.

He was rather vague. I thought he was vague. He probably wasn't, but it was difficult for me to grasp the concept of what this was all about, a non-academic graduate level program where you learn by involvement. This was all pretty new. [Laughs]

[end Tape 3, side 2, begin Tape 4, side 1]

The Coro Foundation, 1952-1953
(Interview 4, January 7, 1976)

Gatov: I did all the things I was supposed to which involved writing a piece about why I wanted to get into the program. Another piece was to describe a political incident. Then they called and said, "Come on in." They had somebody from the civil service commission of the City, and I forget who the other two interviewers were.

Gatov: The first question they asked me was, "How old are you?" I said, "I'm forty," and they said, "Wouldn't you feel a little strange with all these young people?" [Laughs] I didn't really think so. [Laughs] I don't recall any of the other questions.

Anyhow, they called me up in a while, and said that they would like to have me in the program. So I thought, well, I'll do it. They appeared to want me, and what little I could find out about it sounded intriguing, and that's about all I can say. Nobody described it very clearly.

Chall: How old was it, at that time?

Gatov: That was '52. Five years old. The fact that it was a placement program--this much I had picked up ahead of time--rather than an academic program, suited my feelings about political science in general, because by that time, I'd come to know several people who had been really badly treated at Stanford, who were in the political science department, because they got involved in politics. This seemed to me a very ridiculous approach.

Chall: People on the staff of the university? The political science department?

Gatov: Yes. It was frowned upon. They were told that they should not go to such things as CDC conventions or national conventions, and this sort of thing. I thought that was very stupid, [laughs] so this one, which was a placement program, I thought was for me.

Experience as an Intern

Chall: By placement, what do you mean?

Gatov: Well, you get into a program. The opening day is just total confusion, with twelve people. There were nine men, I think, and three women. We played "little casino" at three different tables, and somebody would blow a whistle and we'd all get up and move around and shift and, "Who are you?" and "Who are you?" and "Who are you?"

By the end of the day, we'd been through a number of groupings, and I wondered what all this had to do with anything. But we did know each other's names, and something about each other.

Chall: Did the staff play that game with you?

Gatov: The staff engineered the game, and stood around looking solemn.



Chall: And you all played it.

Gatov: And made horses' asses of ourselves! [Laughter] Anyhow, by the end of the first week, things began to become a little clearer. I remember I was assigned to the Youth Guidance Center in San Francisco as one assignment. The other had to do with the mayor's race, which was then going on between George Christopher and somebody. I can't recall his opponent's name. In the course of which, I made the acquaintance of a man named Hal Dunleavy, who was a political pollster. He showed me how to use a slide rule, taking percentages of election returns, [laughs] a skill I've never lost, and highly treasure. I learned a great deal from that about the involvement of labor organizations through different personalities, and the sort of intertwining network of relationships that goes on, quite unreported in the press. It's nothing that sticks out enough to be newsworthy, but is a very real part of any municipal election. Particularly a non-partisan election, I would think.

I found that absolutely fascinating, and I was horrified at the Youth Guidance Center, which I guess was the intent. It was such a cold-blooded operation. The youngsters were--well, I sort of had the feeling that the people who were taking care of them were so inadequately trained and poorly paid that they could hardly wait to get out of the place.

The super jobs, the top jobs, were filled with splendid people. By the time you got around to people who were probation officers and the hearing judges--they weren't actually judges, but they were people with legal training, who conducted many of the hearings with the families--they were splendid.

But the ones who were directly in contact with the kids who were in detention there were pretty ghastly.

Chall: How were the interns assigned what they studied?

Gatov: By the staff. We had a joint team approach program to our assignments. You paired with one person in the morning and then worked on a different matter in the afternoon. In other words, there was the Youth Guidance Center with someone else in the morning and following the political process by myself in the afternoon.

Chall: How were the pairs made? Do you know?

Gatov: They were arbitrarily assigned by the staff, and if you didn't like it, I suppose you could change. Sometimes we were alone. I was alone on this political one, because they felt that I knew more about politics

Gatov: than, probably, the others did, and that I would therefore plug in at a more sophisticated level, and probably continue it at that level, because I would probably know something about the people I was seeing, and this kind of thing. I could move faster by myself, in this case.

We all together did an administration of justice project, six weeks' exposure, that I remember began in municipal court on a Monday morning, which is a real shocker if you want to wake up your nervous system. Everybody who'd been thrown in the clink over the weekend is there Monday morning. You see the tragic insanity, really, of the system. Half of those poor creatures didn't know who they were, where they were, what they'd done. They really were not just alcoholic, they were gone mentally.

The judge would frequently recognize them, "Are you here again, Tom?" and send them back for, perhaps, six months. The phrase "revolving door" really meant something to me after that particular day. I remember too, in that series, an interview with a superior court judge in Santa Clara County, whose name I can't recall, but we were to ask him questions, and one of the questions was, "How do you find it possible to administer justice?"

He looked down from the bench and said, "I don't administer justice. No court does. We're only here to settle disputes." I thought that was a nice way of putting it. We seem to have tended to idealize the whole legal structure with grand phrases. People go to court to settle disputes. There isn't necessarily any right or wrong about anything, but you just try to take care of their differences as best as you can, and get on to the next. [Laughs]

My next political assignment was the San Francisco Board of Education. Somehow or another, I got steered into the special classes, that is for the crippled, and the blind, and the deaf. The deaf I found absolutely fascinating. There was a school for the deaf then on Gough Street, and the teacher was teaching the children to talk. They were around five years old, I guess. Kindergarten age, if that.

She had an upright piano, and would pick the child up and just lay it out on the top of the piano, and then play chords. Chopin, or something--da da da DAH, da da da DAH--and the child would feel the rhythm. After watching this preliminary stage for a few days, then we'd go on to the third grade, where by this time they were talking, but not terribly well, then to the high school level, when they were talking as you and I, sensitive to the tones. They didn't talk in a loud monotone as though they couldn't hear. I was just astonished that anything like this was possible in a public school system, which it was part of.

Gatov: The afternoon assignment for that period was under the auspices of the brokerage firm, Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner, and Beane, in those days. It was on pension plans, insured pension plans, and other kinds. I learned a great deal. Among the things I learned was that a lot of people pay a lot of money into pension plans and never collect a dime, which was a shocking discovery to me.

Chall: It's shocked some people most recently. Understanding this has been a long time in coming.

Gatov: All the brokerage firm did was just suggest to me where to go, and who had which kinds of plans. I learned a lot.

Then I had this catastrophic assignment with the League of Women Voters.

Chall: Why catastrophic?

Gatov: Well, Caroline Charles a very important person in the community was head of it at the time, and after she got my report, she called Mr. Fletcher, who was the president of the foundation, and asked him who I was and how I dared write such a--I don't remember the word she used, but the general idea was impudent, or disrespectful, or something--report.

We've since become very good friends. I think she's forgotten that this person wrote it. I haven't reminded her. Fletcher called me in to let me know that she hadn't cared for it. Actually, though I haven't read it recently, I still think it was a pretty accurate assessment of their problem, because they didn't know why they were losing so many people, so many new recruits, and they really were operating at too high a level for some of these people to function at. As I recall, that was the sense of my report.

Chall: You also urged them to get more into--

Gatov: I'm sure I did! [Laughter]

Chall: --partisan politics, at least their members should have a board that was made up of Republicans and Democrats in fairly even balance!

Gatov: Well, she didn't like it.

Let's see, my last political assignment was with the Civil Service Commission in San Francisco, where I developed a great feeling for civil servants and for the really miserable life so many of them lead, depending on who's above them. They're really trapped, and there're lots of sadistic people around, and these poor creatures just have no escape.

Gatov: It determined me forever that I would never go that route, whatever else I might do with myself. I would never take a civil service job, because it just means all the exits are closed, it seemed to me. Maybe it's improved since then. After all, it was twenty years ago. I felt that they were pretty unappreciated.

I forget my last economic assignment. It's slipped away from me now.

Chall: Were these assignments--you mentioned political assignments, economic assignments--were they in a specific kind of category?

Gatov: They were split, so you'd get half day on one thing and half day on the other.

Chall: What were the general overall--political?

Gatov: Political and economic, basically.

Chall: And administrative?

Gatov: Well, not much. You got that by observing. Some of the men--it was interesting to note, to me--it was always men who got these jobs, and got these assignments--were assigned to such things as Standard Oil Company, where they really learned a tremendous amount, because they could fade into the woodwork. They would accompany the controller, for instance. They'd sit in the controller's office, all of one day, or half day, perhaps for three or four days, and watch what went on--who came and went, and what his problems were, and the kinds of things he did to solve them, and what the pressures were and so forth.

Chall: That was the business administration? Business?

Gatov: Yes, it really was. It was a business assignment.

Chall: I see. So there were business assignments?

Gatov: Yes, that's what I've called the economic. I should have said business. And labor, and political.

Chall: Those three.

Gatov: Those three. They were general categories. Very frequently, for instance if somebody was assigned to Matson Steamship, which was then in existence, their next assignment would be with the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, or whatever union it was which worked Matson ships. They'd

Gatov: get the other side, and it had a profound emotional effect on a number of the interns. Because you tended to identify with the people you were placed with.

Chall: Yes, you would.

Gatov: The whole program was really intended to upset your balance, whatever it might have been, and make you look around at things from a different point of view. Try to identify with whoever was doing it, but then identify with the other side as well.

Chall: It was very broadening kind of education, and I'm interested in who were the interns picked for this kind of education, and what ultimately became of them that you would know. For example, there were only three women in your class of interns and in the following class. I wondered how many years, as far as you know, the quota on women was three.

Gatov: I think for quite a few years. I think it's only recently, perhaps the last five, that they've had more women. I think there're up to five, roughly five or six. Almost half.

Chall: There have always been just twelve interns, then?

Gatov: Yes, and there are three different programs now. One's in Los Angeles, there's one in San Francisco, and there's one in St. Louis. They're all run the same way.

Chall: What about the fact that there were only three women? You say that they did distinguish in the assignments between the women and the men in some degree.

Gatov: The women didn't get such plums, really, as Standard Oil or the telephone company. I don't know whether they'd ever been asked. The brokerage firm didn't object to me. I just think it was done on a "little boys play with trains and little girls play with dolls" kind of concept, as much as anything. I don't think it was done deliberately, or with any idea of excluding anybody. I think if you'd dreamed up your own idea of where you wanted a placement, they probably would have tried to get it for you.

Chall: The fact that there were only three out of the twelve would indicate that there are more boys playing with trains out there in the world than there are girls?

Gatov: No, on the concept that there are more men in public life, where really, it was geared in those days more than it is today, I think. They seemed to turn out a lot of city managers. A lot of them became city managers.

Gatov: Then a lot of them became staff people, and a lot of them have run for office since. I have to bear in mind that they were all, mostly, twenty years younger than myself, so that class is now at the point where it's beginning to really make an impact, in getting elected to office and so forth. Except for Dianne Feinstein, who's an outstanding one, who got in there earlier.

They've had a number of black interns since I was there. All of whom have done very well. I would rather not name them, because I'm not sure exactly what they're doing right this minute. But they all were people who broke out of the mold, and got into city manager jobs, for instance, in cities where there weren't particularly large black populations. They got into businesses before--long before--the equal opportunity employer idea.

I felt that it was perhaps a bigger advantage to them than almost anybody else we had.

Since I left there, I've gone back quite a lot to meet with the interns and just to talk. They do that a great deal. People come in and they don't tell you who they are, and you just keep asking questions until you finally.... [Laughs] I'm the person who's sitting on the stool, and I'm supposed to answer truthfully. It sometimes takes them thirty minutes to really pin down who they've got, to find out whether you're a seamstress, or a union official, or do you work on a newspaper.

Chall: Oh, "What's My Line?" [Laughs]

Gatov: Kind of, yes. The idea, of course, is to make you more perceptive. There are lots of things like that, incidents that occur in the year, that are just fascinating. It's an excellent sensitivity training, I think.

Chall: Tell me about the people who set it up, the ones you knew?

Gatov: I only knew two.

Chall: John Johnson--

Gatov: John Johnson was an assistant administrator.

Chall: And he left rather soon after--

Gatov: Soon after I came in.

Chall: What did he go into?

Gatov: He, I believe, is still operating, in the sense of managing, the Palo Alto Clinic. The medical clinic with one of the three doctors with the same name--?

Chall: Lee.

Gatov: Lee. And that's what he's still doing.

Chall: Is that what he left to do?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: That was in '52?

Gatov: He lives in Menlo Park. It may have been in '53 or '54 that he actually left. I can't remember.

Chall: Who was Van Duyn A. Dodge?

Gatov: Van Duyn Dodge? He and a man named Morris Cox had an investment counseling firm called Dodge and Cox. Van Duyn Dodge and Donald Fletcher--(W. Donald Fletcher, who lived in Atherton; Van Duyn Dodge lived in Piedmont)--were very close friends. I don't know just why. They and a man named Paul Smith, who had been editor of the Chronicle in the thirties, apparently used to meet for lunch very frequently.

They were all liberal Republicans, and they were despairing of the condition of politics, and the quality, or lack of it, of the people who went into it. They came to the conclusion, just to be as brief as I can about it, that if you were going to be a brain surgeon, you took some training in brain surgery, but there was no school for politics. They thought very dimly of political science courses, because they said, and I agree with them, that they are mostly taught by people who don't know anything about it, because they'd never been involved in the process.

So they dreamed up, over a period of about five years--the war years duration--this program. They talked to everybody under the sun in the City, and at the state level, and in industries, where they were looking for money. You know, "Don't you agree with us that it would be a good thing to have a training program for people who are going to administer the public policies of this city, county, state, nation?"

Of course, everybody said yes, [laughs] so they then opened up for business in 1947. I think they had a lot of World War II veterans. The program qualified for the G.I. Bill, and veterans were paid \$150

Gatov: a month or something, like that at that time. Both Dodge and Fletcher put a good deal of their own money in it over the years. I couldn't guess how much, but I would say it must have been at least \$1 million between the two of them, I'm sure; because they drew no salaries.

Van Duyn was never in the office; Fletcher was full-time. You'd always get to see Dodge in the course of each internship. I became very fond of him. I finally acquired some money in 1960, and the first person I thought to go to was Van Duyn Dodge, just because I regarded him so highly. He died not very long ago.

I had lunch with Don Fletcher at the foundation the other day. They called up a number of people from the early classes, and most of us knew each other. Even though we weren't necessarily in the same class, we'd come across each other in different places. It was a very interesting time. John Johnson was there. We sort of reviewed how things were going and what Fletcher was doing.

He's now out of Coro, but he's running a program for people who have had very little education but are in a job situation that makes it important that they at least develop some more knowledge of how the system works. Their tuitions, which are paid to his operation, are paid by the companies that employ these people. As he described it, they open up and day one, for example starts in the board room of the B of A [Bank of America] building in Los Angeles. He says that most of them have never seen anything like it.

Then somebody from the bank comes in and talks about what he does and what his problems are. It's a mind-stretching thing, if nothing else.

Chall: This is in Los Angeles?

Gatov: Yes.

Evaluating the Experience

Chall: So as far as you're concerned, looking back on it, and seeing it operating today--it's accomplishing what it was intended to accomplish?

Gatov: I think it's remarkable that it's changed so little. This is one of the things we talked about at lunch the other day, that this same program approach of placements, and the effort to balance things and

Gatov: to startle you--and certainly going to court on Monday morning [laughs] is a startling experience--works. And the new people who are running it have not seen fit to change it.

Chall: So that it develops people who are going into public administration and politics.

Gatov: Or if they go into business, or into a labor movement job, even the most insensitive person will develop a little empathy and insight into what the other guy is up against, so to speak.

Chall: In addition to helping you understand intellectually, and maybe emotionally, what these people in various assignments you met were up against, what else did it do? I think in some of your letters that you wrote to Don Fletcher while you were in Europe--

Gatov: That summer, yes.

Chall: --you indicated that you had learned other things. Maybe it was a certain type of poise, maybe it's a balance, a way of looking at a situation, which I think you claimed that they helped you to develop.

Gatov: They did, and I think I know, even if I didn't say it in my letters, what I was referring to. I had always been a spur-of-the-moment conclusion-jumper. [Laughs] This is my basic impulse. I could solve any problem in thirty seconds. [Laughs] This has not been a helpful characteristic at all. I think this experience, one, slowed me down. Two, taught me not to necessarily discredit my first impression and reaction, but to pause a little bit before I acted on it, and three, it made me less doctrinaire, and ultimately now I am unsympathetic to people who are doctrinaire. They irritate me to death, but I was certainly one of them prior to this, I think. I'm sure of it.

So in that sense it was a maturing process, and I could see what it did to the other people, who were younger than I. They really matured enormously. It was just like watching a flower blossom to see how they learned to handle themselves, and to recognize that you could have the most outrageous ideas, but there wasn't much point in dressing in a way that so startled whoever you were trying to impress or influence, that they turned right off before you had a chance to say anything. But that if you appeared to be what they were expecting, you could really get away with quite a lot, because you didn't look as though you had a bomb in both hands, [laughs] or something.

Chall: Even in those days.

Gatov: It was really self-evident, but I guess rather subtle.

Chall: Now how did they teach you all this? I guess when you talked about playing whatever that game was--?

Gatov: Double casino.

Chall: Double casino on the first day. This was in the early fifties, when I think the term was "group dynamics," and it sounds as if you were going through that kind of process all the way through. When you brought back your reports--the paired reports, the class reports, or your individual reports--how were they handled, in terms of just what you were talking about--jumping to conclusions, respecting your own and others' ideas?

Gatov: This was quite subtly handled, if it was handled at all. I can't say that for instance, in a situation affecting myself, anybody said, "She needs to be slowed down and cooled off a bit." I'm not sure at all that anybody thought about that. But that was the effect that it had on me.

I had, for instance, I know gone into the civil service commission, which I didn't particularly want, with the prejudgment that civil servants are all just clock-watchers waiting for their retirement. Well, this experience showed me [laughs] that they may be that, but they are an awful lot of other things too. So I can't say that part of it was really deliberate, but to make you look at different sides of a problem, I know was deliberate.

When we would give our reports, it would take one whole day--in other words we were operating on a four-day week, and the fifth day was in the office. We had to do written reports every week, which were ultimately sent back to the place where we had been observing, but not until after we'd left.

Chall: Were they critiqued?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: They were, so that you got feedback not only from the president of the League of Women Voters, but from everyone else.

Gatov: Yes. We made verbal reports to the other interns, and were asked a lot of very penetrating questions. The staff would join in this too, because of course, they knew the agencies that we were with. Some of them had some bad experiences. I don't recall any such instances now, but I'm sure that there must have been.

Gatov: There was one man, whose name I forget now, who was very labor-oriented. He got into quite a row with his business placement, because he was going to show them how to run the company. [Laughs] These things were all brought up. In my case, because I had really been very shy about public speaking of any kind, I didn't like it--it scared me, and I tended to rattle, and I couldn't think on my feet--it was very helpful. After you do it enough times, you may not like it, but you get so you can do it. That was very beneficial.

I got over feeling embarrassed, became much less self-conscious than I had been up to that time. And as I say, I don't know how much of that was deliberate. Certainly some of the young men didn't appear to need anything like that. I think we all got out of it something different. There was no "pass/fail." [Laughs]

Chall: No, but it was certainly thought through rather carefully.

Gatov: It was a remarkable program. I've seen many other internships since then--some in Washington, some that were done by the Treasury, some in Sacramento, and I don't think any of them are going to touch this one, in the development of the individual. Others may give you more knowledge, but for the benefit of the person, this is really tremendous.

Chall: What's become of Patricia Pitzer?

Gatov: I don't know, and I don't think probably very much. She, as I recall, left to go back to southern California where she came from, and got married, and I expect that she's not overly involved. She wasn't fascinated by the process.

Chall: I was interested that Rosalie Woodward and Austin were husband and wife.

Gatov: They married each other. [Laughs] In the course of the program. That does happen from time to time. I've lost track of them. They live in southern California too.

Chall: Well, they're bound to be better citizens, even if they don't go into public service, I suppose.

On the Staff

Chall: You were put on the staff almost at once?

Gatov: The next year.

Chall: Now that speaks well for what they thought of you. What did they put you on the staff to do?

Gatov: Well, to run something called the "laboratory course." The "laboratory course" consisted of students from different Bay Area colleges--undergraduates--who were recruited through their political science departments, usually. They'd come over to San Francisco and meet in our office at, say, one o'clock.

My job was to line up the interviews for them and be a moderator if they needed a moderator to get them going, and to find people who would be of interest to them, and rather surprising to them. In other words, I wouldn't tell them ahead of time. They didn't know one week to the next where they were going to go, but I had the conference, of course, all set up.

I remember one particular time with Jennie Matyas, who was head of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in San Francisco, and a vice-president of the international ILGWU. It was sort of her retirement project. She was a teensy little person, about five feet tall, with tremendous vitality and energy. She was telling them about being in the Triangle Fire in New York, and the conditions that they'd worked under in the garment factories of the Lower West Side of New York.

And you could literally see the goose pimples come up on these students' arms. They had never met anybody like this, and never would again, probably. [Laughs]

But this was the kind of thing that I was trying to do, to find people who would participate, at least to that extent, of giving us four hours, and letting the students probe. And of course, it taught the students a lot about interviewing, which they mostly hadn't known anything about, or done anything about. Of course, in those days Ed Murrow was alive, so I could suggest that they watch him and learn. [Laughs]

That was the chief thing I did, otherwise I was just involved in the program, reading the students' written reports, and taking some of the discussion groups, because they had lost one staff member, I simply replaced. I wasn't added on.

Chall: Was the laboratory course new? Did you set it up, or had it been going?

Gatov: It had been going, and not terribly well. I felt that it could do a lot better, if they made a few more friends in the political science departments around, instead of treating them with contempt, [laughs] which Fletcher couldn't help doing. So I relieved him of that, and would go around the different campuses myself, and try to explain why a non-academic course would be of some value. [Laughs] So I got a lot more applicants for it. It was on a quarterly basis, and we had lots of applicants. It was fun. I enjoyed it.

Chall: You must have met a few political science professors whom you came to admire here and there.

Gatov: Oh, I did! Well, one of them--John Bunzel, who's now president of San Jose State. He taught at Stanford and was fired, and then he went to San Francisco State, and was part of the administration there and taught also; and now he's at San Jose State.

Chall: As the president?

Gatov: As president. Another is Eugene Canfield Lee, who's here [Berkeley]. He and his wife are very, very dear friends of ours. Those are the two that stand out most in my mind. Frankly, I really wasn't attracted very much to them; they were so dry!

Chall: Peter Odegard, did you know him?

Gatov: Yes, Peter Odegard, but I knew him politically. He was a remarkable man. Somehow he seemed to be able to get by with his political activities.

The Democratic National Campaign, 1952

Chall: You went away during the summer to the Democratic party convention. You were on the Coro staff and you also went around to try to interest foundations in providing support to Coro. Were they bothered by this?

Gatov: Well, I didn't talk about it a great deal. They didn't ask me and I didn't tell them, and I felt that I was on firm ground as long as my name didn't appear in the papers. I was not willing to give up all political activity just because I was associated with the Coro Foundation. I thought that this made no sense.

Chall: Did they know that? Was there a general stipulation at the time you went on the staff?

Gatov: They told me that political activity was discouraged--partisan political activity. But I was at that time, when they accepted me as an intern, congressional district co-chairman. They knew that I was on the Brown delegation, which was defeated. That didn't seem to upset them. I told them what little they had to know, in other words, but I didn't think that telephone calls or who I had lunch with and that sort of thing was necessarily a concern to them.

Ellie Heller gave a dinner in May of '52 at which I met Adlai Stevenson.

Chall: Was that the first time you'd met him?

Gatov: Yes. I'd known his sister in Southern Pines, but I'd never met him. I was charmed, needless to say. This was after the time that you refer to in your notes, about our congressional district caucus meeting and selecting our delegates [to the national convention]. That was very early. I believe in 1951.

We didn't know how delegates were selected in those days, and nobody wanted to be very candid about it. So we thought we'd select our own, and send them in to the state chairman. We had a caucus [of First Congression District Democrats in Ukiah] and came out with John Watson and myself. John Watson was a rancher and on the State Board of Agriculture, and the state Chamber of Commerce, as I recall. A wonderful man, I just adored him. He was probably in his early sixties, at this time. He lived in Sonoma County, outside of Petaluma. He could raise money and help us find candidates. Oh, he was just a dream [laughs]; what everybody who works in politics would like to have six of.

I don't think I was at Coro at this time, because I remember where I was. I was doing public relations for the Red Cross. I remember being in my office and the phone rang, and it was Ellie. It was Monday morning, and she was outraged that we would have the presumption to do this. I was sure that she'd never speak to me again, because I was defending it. I argued that all these people were there, and they felt that they knew as much about the people in the district as any other group possibly could, and that this was simply an advisory recommendation, our recommendation. There was nothing to make anybody accept it, but we thought that this was something we could properly do.

Gatov: There was a deadly hush at the other end of the line, but later she forgave me, obviously. Our delegation selections eventually became those of the Brown delegation for the First Congressional District, which that was at that time.

[end Tape 4, side 1, begin Tape 4, side 2]

Chall: I'm still interested in how you happened to get the idea that you could make this kind of delegate selection?

Gatov: It's done now.

Chall: But it wasn't done then. What gave you the idea that you could do it? [Laughter]

Gatov: That's what Ellie Heller wanted to know. [Laughs]

Chall: I just wondered whether there was something in the rules that allowed it, but that nobody paid any attention to it.

Gatov: There was nothing in the rules. There are no rules, at least there weren't until George McGovern came on the scene, and the reform commissions and so forth started after the '68 convention. Up to that time, there had been no written rules. There's nothing in the election code except to stipulate certain specifics,

The national committee really is--was, I should say--the final arbiter as to how many delegates a congressional district got, how many delegates the state got, what bonuses they got. There was a very complicated mathematical formula, which I later came to understand when I was on the executive committee for the national committee.

Chall: Devised by the national committee?

Gatov: Devised by the national committee and handed out to the states. You were told you had X number of votes. Then, if you wished to, you could use half votes. I think they declined to allow quarter votes. Once upon a time, those were done.

As I told you, the first district in the '48 and '50 Democratic state conventions was gung-ho on changing the way things were run. [Laughs] We resented the idea, frankly, that Bill Malone and Ed Heller--though we liked Ed personally--five people were running the Democratic party.

Chall: The whole state?

Gatov: At that time.

Chall: Who were the other three?

Gatov: I'm trying to think of who they were, and maybe their names will come to me. One was a man named Elliott [John B.] from southern California. Some of the southern Californians, maybe, will tell you more about him.

Chall: Was he in congress at that time?

Gatov: No, he was just a party leader. There were just a few people who kept right on running everything. It was sort of none of our business how delegates were picked. This was the way we felt, at any rate. So we thought, "Well, it is our business, and we'll make a recommendation and see what happens!" We were the first district, we were the first to pick our delegates, and we took care that the press knew about it.

I felt we'd done something that might inspire some other districts to do the same thing. I don't recall that it did. It was as good a way as any, and as I say, actually we all wound up on the delegation, which suddenly fell apart when Truman withdrew in '52.

Chall: We were going to talk about this Elinor Heller party.

Gatov: She picked a few delegates and invited them to dinner with Adlai Stevenson, who was on his way to--among other things, at any rate, to Santa Barbara for the Rancheros Visitadores annual ride. My Montreal brother was a member of the Rancheros, and he used to come out to it regularly. When he did, I used to go down, drive down and spend the last couple of days there, get in on the fun and the festivities.

I knew Stevenson was headed there.

Chall: Elinor Heller did too?

Gatov: I don't know. I guess she did, but I don't think she knew I was. It was a perfectly lovely party, as all of her parties always were. I was much impressed by Governor Stevenson, and I thought if there was any possible way I could do anything to help this man, who was then denying that he was even considering getting involved in the presidential race, I wanted to. The word was out that Truman had picked him, and the machinery was going to go to work to nominate him.

Well, the machinery didn't mean anything to me, in those days. In fact nothing about national politics was in my ken, really. So with Pat Brown picking up the delegation as an uncommitted "favorite son"

Gatov: sort of effort, running against Estes Kefauver, who shook every other hand in California, the Brown delegation was defeated resoundingly. I think it was two and a half to one or something. A whopping landslide for Kefauver.

So the Kefauver delegation then took over, politically, and elected Clara Shirpser as national committeewoman, and shortly thereafter elected George Miller, Jr as state chairman--Senator George Miller, Jr. from Contra Costa County.

A man named Bert Coffey, who is now the state chairman (1977), was sort of George's executive secretary when he became state chairman. Because the First Congressional District had tried, in 1948 and 1950 to elect Miller as state chairman, he and Coffey were very friendly toward us. So Bert called me and asked if I wouldn't come on the Kefauver delegation as an alternate. I said no, I was for Adlai Stevenson by this time, whom I'd met, and I had no intention of staying locked up until the cows came home on the Kefauver delegation. But I wanted to go to the convention, so I thought and thought about how I could do that. A press credential!

Attending the Convention as a Reporter

Gatov: So I went back to my old friends at the Independent-Journal, and offered, for a very modest sum--I think it was nine dollars a story--to file three stories about the Marin members of the delegation--there were quite a few Kefauver people from Marin County--if they would write a letter to the press department of the Democratic National Committee, authorizing me to be their representative.

They thought that was a good deal, all around; I was supposed to pay my own way. So then I called back to George Miller's office, and said I'd like to get on the train, and I'd like to share a room with Nancy Strawbridge (later Jewel), who was on the delegation. This didn't seem to be any problem, so I found myself on the delegation train.

I don't know whether you've come across the account that I wrote of that at the time, but it was the most amazing trip I have ever taken! [Laughs] It was the last such trip. They never took a train again.

Chall: I see. I noticed that you'd written a letter to Pat Brown in '56, telling him to beware of trains! [Laughs]

Gatov: Oh, it was ludicrous the things that happened to poor George. Basically, that story was, I think, correct. There's no point in repeating it.

Chall: We'll put it in your papers in The Bancroft Library.

Gatov: But it's something that should never happen. After air age arrived a train was no way to transport a bunch of political aspirants bent on making presidents.

Chall: I think, though, that's probably the way it had always been done.

Gatov: It had always been done that way, and I'm sure that the shenanigans that went on weren't unique. The Republicans had one in 1952, as you recall, when Richard Nixon got on the train in Denver or something, and double-crossed Warren by the time he got to Chicago. It's just no place! They should get there on their own, or anything else, but not travel all in a bunch for so long.

Anyhow, we arrived. It was a very hot day. There was very little air conditioning, even then in Chicago. The press headquarters was in the basement of the Hilton Hotel, or the Stevens Hotel, I guess it was called then. It's now the Hilton, on Michigan Avenue. It was a Sunday, and I picked up a copy of the Chicago Tribune on my way down to the press headquarters, where I stood in line along with a lot of other people, waiting to pick up my press badges and stuff.

There was the seating chart for the convention in the paper. This is when I first began to appreciate what the national committee could do, if stimulated. There was the podium, and directly in front of it was Illinois, of course, the host state. Right around the podium were New York, Connecticut--all the states that were friendly to Truman. The three Kefauver states--and there were only three, Tennessee, California, and one other--were up against the walls and in the very back.

In those days, communication was more difficult than now. It's more complicated today, but it was more difficult then--you really had to get around the crowded floor. The Kefauver states couldn't possibly communicate with each other. They were out of visual range from the presiding officer, who didn't have to notice them. They could wiggle their banners indefinitely, and never get recognized, because there would always be somebody much nearer that he could recognize. The chairman was Sam Rayburn.

Chall: He wasn't about to recognize! [Laughter]

Gatov: He wasn't about to! So anyhow, one look at that chart convinced me that Kefauver had lost, there was no way he could possibly win the nomination, and that these rumors were undoubtedly true that Truman had picked Stevenson, and Stevenson was going to get it.

The California delegation got into a terrible fight that night, because there was another competing delegation. I can't remember the name, now, of the man who headed it, but he was kind of a nut, and his delegates were whacking the regular delegates over the head with chairs.

Chall: A competing delegation within--?

Gatov: California.

Chall: California? You mean two different delegations?

Gatov: Yes, the other ones demanded that they be seated, and said the Kefauver one was illegal.

Chall: Is that right? I didn't know that.

Gatov: I'm sure that the front pages of the local papers will show you people hitting each other over the head with chairs!

Chall: I noticed it in your letter, but I didn't understand it.

Gatov: It was unbelievable! [Laughs] You couldn't imagine that this, really, was going on, but it did. However, finally they were thrown out, the other ones, and the Kefauvers settled down to try to make good medicine. They let me in, and I would then type my stories and telegraph them back.

I'd get a balcony ticket each day. I wasn't entitled to the regular press area, and so they'd give me a guest ticket each day and that would admit me to the balcony, which was good enough and in some ways, better.

Chall: Who would give you the guest ticket?

Gatov: The Kefauver delegation.

Chall: But not a press--?

Gatov: Not a press ticket. But I got into other press things, such as the press buses, to and from the convention, which were great sources of information, because there was all this gossip going on, and there

Gatov: was a press lounge at the conventional hall, where I met Ed Murrow. It was the greatest moment of my life, up to that time! He was a very tall man, about six two or three, at least. Very slender, and he was all done up in a white Palm Beach suit. He was a splendid character.

I met a lot of the other people, like Martin Agronsky, who were just coming along at that time, and Eric Sevareid, and Marietta Tree. I went to a party at her apartment, I remember.

Chall: Marietta Tree was in the press?

Gatov: No, but she was entertaining press people. I don't know how I got included, but I did. And I also used to visit other delegation caucuses. All the press badges were blue, and they just said PRESS. In very fine print, they said whatever you represented. But basically, you were recognized because of the blue. This entitled you to use the freight elevators to ride up and down with the trays--much faster than standing in line in the lobbies waiting for the overworked passenger elevators. [Laughs] I learned a great deal about back stairs and so on, how to get around quickly.

Occasionally, if I was curious about what a delegation was doing, I'd just find out when their caucus was going to be, and go in. Nobody ever threw me out. They'd just see PRESS--well, okay, come in. It was the most educational political experience I had ever had, up to that time certainly, or for many years afterward. I learned more about conventions, and how they work, and what some of these little delicate things like seating charts have to do with the outcome.

And hotels! The Kefauver people were not given very good hotels, and they were spread out; the others were bunched. It's the way it was arranged.

Chall: I was interested in your comments about what you learned. For example, when you saw the seating chart, were you aware of what you were seeing when you saw the seating chart--the implications?

Gatov: Yes, I knew it.

Chall: Why? I mean, how come? It was the first convention you'd seen. Why were you so smart?

Gatov: I'd heard about the national convention. I wasn't smart.

Chall: Yes, you are.

Gatov: It was just, you know, reading the nose on your face, really. I knew that Truman wanted Stevenson. I knew there were only three delegations committed to Kefauver. I knew enough to know that the power of the incumbent presidency is considerable. I didn't know how considerable, and that for Truman to simply say he wanted something done would, in all probability get it done, unless somebody else appeared, and nobody, of course, had. This is another factor that Kefauver was really the only contending candidate.

I don't know why Truman didn't like him, but he didn't, nor did a lot of other people, obviously. So you knew that they were going to try to do whatever they could do, to have it come out that Stevenson would get it. For instance, I knew that he was going to make the welcoming speech, which would be the first public appearance for him in front of most of the delegates who hadn't met him. Obviously, that was going to be a very important slot, opening night.

When I looked at the seating chart, I filled with admiration, really. I thought that this was one way that you try to make things come out the way you want them to. In other words, this was power politics, and I understood about all those terms. After all we'd been through a little of that at the state level--pockets full of proxies, and things like this--you play "for keeps" in this arena. As long as it's not too indelicate and too obvious, you try to do whatever you can. So this is what they did--gave him prime exposure opening night.

Then Stevenson carried himself, from the seating chart on. They gave him that help. But that twenty minute speech--anybody who ever heard it will never forget it. I think it's almost like the Kennedy inaugural that people remember so. It was a brilliant speech, the best I ever heard him make. He was at one time, charming, humorous, intelligent, informed and setting a high standard.

Chall: But he was still not a candidate? Is that true? How could he not be a candidate?

Gatov: Well, he wasn't a candidate in the sense that he wouldn't admit that he was a candidate. He hadn't been around wooing delegates, beyond Ellie's dinner, and there weren't many of us there. I would say, perhaps there were fifteen altogether, so that wasn't a tremendous chunk of the hundred and fifty, probably, delegates who went.

Really, he just captivated the delegates that night, in a true sense. I've never seen it done since.

Chall: But the California delegation believed that it was Jake Arvey who was behind it?

Gatov: They were right. They were absolutely right. The story I heard was that Arvey and Truman were talking about what to do after Truman had suddenly pulled out, and Truman just said, "Arvey, you've got the candidate." Adlai Stevenson, who Arvey didn't like. Stevenson was not his cup of tea at all. [Laughs] He was much too pure. He had lofty ideas about graft and corruption--you shouldn't have them, they were bad.

Arvey's reputation was pretty much, well, "you do what it takes to get the thing done." They didn't care for each other. It was no surprise to me, but Arvey took the idea from the president.

I learned a lot more after I finally got to Washington, about the enormous persuasive powers of the president, even a going-out president, as Truman was. After all he was still going to be there for another nine months at the time of his decision, and I'm sure that Arvey didn't argue with him. Truman said, "this is the man." He'd looked all over, and Stevenson's record was good, and he was a new governor, and he was, up to that time, a successful governor, and he'd had Washington experience during the war. I guess this is what appealed to Truman. I never heard, really, the details of it.

But they were right that it was Arvey.

Chall: In one of your letters, you indicated that, certainly by the end of the first day, after you'd been around, you knew that Stevenson was going to get the nomination.

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: But you were rooming with Nancy Strawbridge?

Gatov: Yes. I told them all what I heard. They thought I was freer than they, which was true.

I was also being wined and dined and wooed by the Kefauver people. The Stevenson people didn't pay any attention to me, but the Kefauvers had two hideaways, one for men, and one for women. The one for men was staffed by a lot of Junior Leaguers from Memphis, as I recall. Lots of magnolias, a very "southern mansion" sort of environment, where drinks were available and food and so on.

The other one was a sort of seduction parlor, which was on the roof of another hotel, where there were candles in wax-covered wine bottles, intimate tables, and very dim light.

Chall: Who did they have in there? [Laughs] Was that a typical way?

Gatov: The only time I ever saw it done.

Chall: But that was run by men?

Gatov: That was run by men for women delegates. This is where men were supposed to bring women delegates, and persuade them, for whatever. The idea was to persuade them for Kefauver; they may have gotten persuaded into a whole lot of other things.

But it was a very interesting setup, this totally contrasting environment.

Chall: Then the by-play over the loyalty oath, which I guess many people felt was what either damaged Kefauver or helped Stevenson. That's been written about a great deal, and so we probably don't have to go into that.

Gatov: I don't recall much about it.

Women

Chall: Well, we have the information in your letter, so we can let that go.

What about women of the press? Were there any women?

Gatov: Mary Ellen Leary is the only one that I recall.

Chall: She was there?

Gatov: I'm not sure that she was there, but I remember her in those early days. There was another woman reporter, also for Scripps-Howard.

Chall: Ruth Finney?

Gatov: Ruth Finney [Allen] with the Sausalito News, who ultimately went to Washington.

Chall: So those were two women whom you remember in the press.

Gatov: Very well.

Chall: Otherwise, there weren't very many women wearing press badges in 1952?

Gatov: I don't recall many. I don't recall, either, noticing that there weren't. I wasn't looking for it. Can you see that?

Chall: I understand.

Gatov: You know, the "mind set," as they say. [Laughs] In those days I didn't expect to see many women, and so I wasn't impressed that there weren't many.

Chall: Were you impressed that you were? That you were there, as a woman?

Gatov: No, because I had worked before for the paper I was representing. I made friends with a young reporter from the Richmond, Virginia paper, who was a friend of a friend of mine. He was the one who showed me about the press lounges, and the buses, and the back stairs, and all these things.

Chall: You would need to be shown around, then?

Gatov: You really did, because I wouldn't have dreamed of getting on the elevator with a lot of service trays and stuff. [Laughs] But you did, and you weren't thrown off. It was that badge which kept them from doing it.

Chall: Did you bring binoculars with you?

Gatov: No, but I bought some, because it did help.

Chall: Have you any recollection of some of the women whom you saw at the convention, the delegates, how they impressed you?

Gatov: Well, yes. On the train, they all looked as though they'd just come in from the beach in Waikiki. Most informally clad. [Laughs]

Chall: It was pretty hot on the train, I understand.

Gatov: It was ghastly. I thought that they were a good, involved, intent lot. I don't recall any women from any other delegation than our own. I don't recall being impressed or unimpressed. But of our own, I was. I knew some of them. I knew quite a number of them, and got to know them even better. I can't think of anything unusual about them. They were participating; there were quite a number of them. I don't remember how many, and I don't remember being surprised that there were not more, or that there were so many. I think I took it all pretty much for granted.

Chall: That's the way it was.

Gatov: That's just the way it was. These were the people who made that delegation.

Chall: Vera Schultz wrote you a long letter while you were in Europe, and she said, after giving you all the information about what was going on in Marin County at the time politically, in her campaign--she said that "We just had the good fortune to be present at a UNIQUE political event, the like of which will probably never be repeated."

Now you've been to several conventions since then, would you consider 1952 unique in capital letters?

Gatov: No; but it may have been unique up to that point. 1960, to me, was the unique convention. Some of my students were recently trying to get extra credits, because one course that I teach is only two hours, so I've assigned them the Theodore White 1960 book, because I told them that I suspect that this year (1976) is going to be closer to 1960 than to any of the others that he wrote about.*

No, 1960 to me was a real breathtaking cliffhanger, but this one [1952] was not.

Chall: That's because you knew what the outcome would be?

Gatov: I suspected what the outcome would be, and Vera Schultz was very disappointed, terribly disappointed. They all were. The Kefauver delegates were true believers in the best sense of that word. They really felt that he was the only qualified candidate, and the nomination was stolen from them. And I guess they were right.

Chall: From a standpoint of the mechanics of it, I suppose they were, because I guess that Kefauver had done well for two ballots.

Gatov: I think he had.

Chall: And then after the loyalty oath thing, it all went downhill, but it was probably part of the plan, I suppose.

Gatov: Of course, in those days--I don't know how he fared in other primaries--but I do know that in those days, California was one of the few delegations that had a total commitment to the winner. Practically all the eastern delegations, where Kefauver may have been very popular, were run by the party, or the governor, or the party chairman, or whatever arrangement they had. It had much, much more dictated delegations.

*Theodore White, The Making of the President--1960

Gatov: I do recall, for instance, Nancy and I that first evening went to one of the few air-conditioned places, a bar in the basement of the Palmer House. We had all our badges on. Next to us were about six men, all in dark blue, all of them just alike, we thought. One of them came up and wanted to know if he could buy us a drink.

We said, "I'm sorry, thank you, but we have ours." Well, after a while he motioned to us to sit down. So we sat down, and he peered at our badges--"Are you from California?" He wanted to know how you got on the delegation in California; so Nancy explained that there was a selection committee, and so forth. He bought none of this at all, [laughs] and pointed out there were no women on the Massachusetts delegation, and that he'd heard, you know, the only way a woman got on any delegation was to be somebody's mistress. Why else would they put her on? [Laughs]

Well, we thought that he was so obsolete it was ridiculous, and he, I'm sure, thought that we were all there because somebody else wanted us there. So these kinds of things--these cultural conflicts, almost--did occur. And they were illuminating to me. What we knew then as the California way of doing things was really quite rare.

Chall: There was a question that I wanted to pick up about the party at the Hellers'. Was your husband with you? Was this a party of delegates and spouses?

Gatov: No, it was not delegates and spouses. It was just delegates.

Chall: It was really a political party.

Gatov: A political party, yes.

Chall: Press statements to the contrary notwithstanding. You were an intern during the primary campaign, so am I assuming that you did not participate in the primary?

Gatov: There wasn't anything much to participate in, really. I was picked as a Brown delegate. The delegation was qualified. The signatures were gathered professionally as I recall. We each put up \$100 or something, and that would pay the signature-gatherers. The rest of the campaign was up to Attorney General Pat Brown.

Chall: I see.

Gatov: Who was busily telling the state that he wasn't a candidate. [Laughs] I think he knew what was going to happen.

Chall: I see, but the Kefauver people were the ones who were campaigning then? Those of you who were opposed to Kefauver had not done--?

Gatov: Didn't do anything. It was useless to talk about Adlai Stevenson, because nobody knew him, and he wasn't a candidate, and kept saying so. We knew we were delegates for Stevenson when Truman pulled out.

Chall: Well, you went to Europe after the convention, and I assume you had a good time?

Gatov: Had a lovely time.

Chall: You were with your brother?

Gatov: My oldest brother, yes, who had invited me to go along because his wife didn't particularly care to go. He liked to have a hostess and a traveling companion. It was very, very pleasant. We went on the Queen Mary and came back on the Queen Elizabeth. It was delightful. We sat at somebody's table, the purser, or I think it was the captain's table. We and somebody else, the doctor--

It was very, very, very pleasant.

Chall: After the convention it must have been a needed rest.

Gatov: Oh, it was lovely.

Chall: Were the people in the convention just exhausted at the end?

Gatov: I was. Well, for lots of reasons. First of all, you don't get much sleep. The emotional strain, to me, even though I had nothing to do with it, was enormous, because I invested a good deal of feeling into the Stevenson possibility. There's a lot of drinking, and as I say, very little sleep.

I just recall getting on the airplane and conking out. It was total exhaustion.

Chall: When you came back, did you participate in the campaign for Adlai Stevenson?

Gatov: Very little, because I was then on the Coro staff and I felt inhibited from doing that in any more than just a modest way; so I could make recommendations about people and talk to people on the phone at home, and this kind of thing. I didn't really get involved with the campaign very much.

Aftermath of the Campaign and the Decision to Leave Coro

Chall: Just to get to the end of the story on that aspect of your life, before you got heavily into politics, somewhere in this year, the following year, you quit Coro.

Gatov: Yes. Well, one thing you asked me--if I'd campaigned much in the Stevenson campaign and I said no, which was true. But I did participate quietly among people who were already in the campaign, because there really weren't, in those days, an awful lot of people who'd had any campaign experience. The fact that I'd already been in two congressional campaigns, for instance, gave me some knowledge that was somewhat in demand.

The Malone people walked away. Ellie Heller just separated herself from Bill Malone by coming out for Stevenson, and being so forthright about him.

Chall: That was early?

Gatov: That was early in '52.

Chall: Who was Bill Malone for?

Gatov: I think he was for Stevenson too, but half-heartedly. I don't think he thought he was a good candidate. I don't think he thought he was going to win. Bill Malone was one of the old time pros who had really no interest in any kind of politics except presidential and congressional, because that was where patronage lay. His interest was in distributing patronage.

He, for all intents and purposes, disappeared. I don't recall him having anything much to do with the campaign. I think, probably, Stevenson told him that he wouldn't give him his patronage, and he wouldn't let him be "the man to see" in California, in other words, which Roosevelt and Truman had done. So with that gone, his motivation was gone.

Chall: So in about 1952, he disappeared from state politics?

Gatov: He was no longer evident, in my recollection, in that presidential campaign, nor having a hand in running it or doing much of anything.

Chall: And thereafter?

Gatov: Thereafter, he came back at different times. He came back in the Kennedy campaign. I remember he was treasurer for a dinner that we put on then. I have a picture of him with myself and Kennedy in 1956.

Gatov: Kennedy looks as though he was about to graduate from high school. There's Malone on one side of him and me on the other.

But Bill, by this time, had accommodated to the new group, and he wasn't unpleasant. He would participate if he felt like it, and if he didn't, he didn't. But there was nobody running this '52 campaign. This is where I got to know Don Bradley and Jack Abbott. Abbott is now the editor, I believe, or the executive director of California Tomorrow, which Alf [Alfred] Heller started a long time ago.

Chall: What was he then?

Gatov: He was then the press department for the Stevenson campaign.

The old county central committees, for instance, were doing absolutely nothing about the campaign. They really never have done much of anything. A lot of people who had never been in politics before were very stimulated by Adlai Stevenson. They wanted to see something done, so since there was nobody else doing anything, they took things into their own hands, and were raising money, and running ads in the local paper, and seeking contributions and votes, and putting on really quite a vigorous campaign. All the time, getting their knuckles rapped by the others who felt that they were intruding.

Well, they didn't win, but many of them were in politics from then on, to stay. This was really the genesis of the CDC [California Democratic Council] the new crop of people.

So what got me out of Coro was, first of all, an invitation from George Miller, Jr. (he was the state chairman) to go to a meeting at Asilomar to discuss the future of the Democratic party. I think it was called something like--

Chall: --"What's Wrong with the Democratic Party?"

Gatov: Something broad like that. It was an inconclusive meeting, but conclusive enough so that we had another one. This meeting was going to lead to other meetings, because it was necessary. A lot of things that would need to be done were apparent; it was just that how you went about them was not quite so apparent. I got the feeling that things were going to happen in the Democratic party.

I think I mentioned earlier that the Rudel Machinery Company in Montreal, of which I was a director, began to prosper some, and they decided that they'd pay some directors' fees--not any huge sum but it was enough to make it possible for me to not have to have a salary. Another of those things that happened to me at a very fortunate time!

Gatov: I told you that the Coro internship was possible because a friend of my mother's had died and left me \$1000. That plus \$150 a month from Coro made it possible to get the help to make the household function.

The Rudel Machinery Company fee was about \$350 a month. By that time, things were easier for my husband, too. He'd gotten more established. My children were older. Everything worked, so to speak.

So I thought, well, I'd like to volunteer my services to the Democratic party headquarters for a year.

Chall: To the CDC?

Gatov: No, to the state central committee, because the state central committee set up the CDC. Without George Miller taking the lead in organizing it, it probably never would have come about. But he recognized that there was an awful lot of political energy available, and if we were going to do anything constructive, we were going to need that energy, because the old way had gone. We didn't have enough rich people left around. Ed Heller was still there, and was still generous. But George had dreams of such things as capturing the state legislature and the governorship, and things that were of no interest, really, to the people who had been running the party previously. They were only interested in federal elections. State elections meant nothing.

George decided that under his leadership, the party was going to go places. He, because he was in the state senate, naturally was thinking in those terms, and such things as special elections, where you can really make a dent by raising money from a lot of different people outside the district, putting all the talents you can get together--press people, campaign managers--and dumping it all into one district. You can quite possibly win the seat, which was the way he started doing it--picking them up one by one, so to speak.

Chall: So you thought of volunteering your services?

Gatov: I believed in what they were trying to do, whatever form it took. The name wasn't developed at that time. It was just that the state central committee was forbidden by law to engage in a lot of things. One of the things it was forbidden to do was make pre-primary endorsements. We still had crossfiling, so without the pre-primary endorsement, we were going to remain fractured and out of office.

[end Tape 4, side 2]

IV FIRST YEARS AS A FULL-TIME VOLUNTEER IN POLITICS, 1953-1956
(Interview 5, January 14, 1976)
[begin Tape 5, side 1]

Joining the Staff of the Democratic Party

Chall: I thought our interview today would start with your decision to leave Coro. We went into a bit of that last week, but I think you should tell me what was happening there that made you decide to leave, and about what date.

Gatov: Well, I would guess I made the decision probably sometime in the spring of 1953.

Chall: Oh, it was as early as that?

Gatov: Yes, because there had been the meeting I think we discussed, Asilomar, which was leading up to the starting of the foundations at least, of the California Democratic Council. By spring, it was apparent that the council was going to come into existence, and also that there was going to be a lot more vitality in the Democratic party. In other words, these new people who were inspired by Stevenson in the '52 campaign were not going to go away. They were already displaying a continuing interest.

The party headquarters was very inadequately staffed. It was on Market Street in those days. I can't remember the exact address. I think it was 672 or 627. The building is no longer there, in any case. It was a walk-up, a small, one-room sort of affair. Senator George Miller, Jr., was the state chairman. Don Bradley was the executive secretary, and there was one paid staff in addition to Don. That was it.

George was practically never there, because he was in Sacramento with the state legislature. Things were beginning to move, and I knew Don Bradley quite well, and I knew George quite well from the 1950

Gatov: campaign; they had been very helpful to Roger Kent. George ran for lieutenant governor that year with Jimmy Roosevelt in 1950. Don was very much involved in the Helen Douglas campaign.

So this was the basis of my relationship with them. I began to think that [laughs] "now was the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party" kind of thing. The Democratic party was going to go someplace, I believed. It seemed to me that if you had enough people helping, it would work.

So after considering the situation--I mentioned that I was now financially in a position so that I could do it, not easily, but I could--I went in to ask Don Fletcher and Van Duyn Dodge--the top people--what they considered to be a violation of the public trust of Coro to which I was subject as a staff member. They thought about it, and then Van Duyn said, "Well, I would think making a contribution, a financial contribution to a party or a candidate."

I said, "Well, I guess that settles the matter then," because that seemed to me to be such a small, minor kind of thing; in those days it wasn't even reported. If that was a violation, what I had in mind was clearly in violation! I just told them that I really felt this need to participate, and a desire to help make this thing work.

They were sympathetic and said, "You can stay until the end of the year." Of course, I intended to stay until the end of that academic year, which was June. At first I checked with Bradley and George Miller, asked if they would like to have a full-time volunteer, specifically me? They said yes, they would, and they put in an extra desk and I just moved in in September of that year. September of '53.

Chall: I'm interested in your plan to be a volunteer in politics. One of the reasons that you went into Coro was because you were interested in public service; you had done some work in politics, and you felt that was one way, perhaps, to better the political process. The other is that you were really, in a sense, headed for a professional career if professions were open to you. You'd floated around a bit with that, hadn't you?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Some people have said that some women go into politics because--or did in the past--because professional careers were closed to them, and that some of the women who were active were doing it as a substitute for a profession.

Gatov: I didn't feel that way. I understood it realistically--there simply wasn't any money. I knew what their financial situation was. They were getting \$25 a month from Roger Kent, and \$25 a month from Bill Roth and \$250 a month from Ed Heller, and that was it.

They were able to pick up money through Jefferson-Jackson Day dinners, and this kind of thing, which they usually applied to overdue debts from the telephone company, and the landlord, and so on. Bradley lived off his savings all that year. There just wasn't any money, and I well knew that, so it wasn't that kind of a choice.

I never felt that any of the avenues that I might be seeking, such as professional political campaign management, would be hampered because I'd had experience as a volunteer. In the second Kent campaign, I was paid \$200 a month expenses. I'd had, for a woman of that time, a good deal of experience, and I'd also had some public relations experience and press experience. I thought I had a fairly well-rounded base.

But I felt that all of this would be enhanced by an increased stature of the Democratic party. In other words, there was no question in my mind that I was not going to run Republican campaigns. I wasn't going to do that. I intended this activity to only last a year. When I went to George to offer my services, I said, "Would you like a volunteer for a year, just to help get you over the hump of organizing, and having the first convention of CDC, the organizing convention, and then helping put on the first actual convention, the endorsing convention?" In other words, first you'd have to get organized so that you had officers, and have some plan as to how you got credentialed, what clubs were members.

It was a very complicated time-consuming thing that just took an awful lot of hours. Not much brains, particularly, but you had to figure out the logistics of getting people there; where was a good place to have it. Well, Asilomar was well liked, but the consensus was that it was too hard to get to. Fresno turned out to be the best selection.

Chall: You could see all these problems coming up, and you thought that you would like to help in solving them, but at the end of that year, you were thinking that you would then go into some professional political career?

Gatov: I wasn't going to run. I never had any thought of running for office myself. First of all, I'd been married three times by then, and in those days I thought that that would be a really much too fascinating topic to ever get around to anything else. [Laughs] Even by then, I'd seen enough, I think, of what candidates have to go through to not have any great desire to run.

Gatov: I was much more interested in putting things together. In other words, pretty soon we should get into how Roger Kent became the state chairman in '54, things like this. Building relationships, involving people who could be helpful to us in a way that they would want to be helpful, recruiting other volunteers to help with the work I was doing. I didn't see anything wrong with it. I didn't see that this was giving up anything in particular. As I said, financially it was possible for me to do it, and I don't recall looking at it in terms of either impeding or accelerating further plans.

Chall: Just something that you wanted to do?

Gatov: Just something that I wanted very much to do, and I indulged myself, and could indulge myself and do it.

Chall: You were apparently considered capable of running a college; a women's college, naturally! So that this was using your organizational skill.

Gatov: Well, this was really my first time on a northern California basis, to try to use it. I'd been trying to do things on a congressional district basis, and of course, those contacts remained, and then I went on into northern California politics.

Chall: So after the summer, you went into the office there--were they still on Market Street or had they moved to Sutter?

Gatov: They were still on Market Street. They stayed on Market Street until after Roger came in.

California Democratic Council Organizing Convention, 1953

Chall: Then we might as well discuss the organizing convention in Fresno for CDC. But would you tell me what you did between September, when you went into the offices to volunteer, and November, when they had the convention? What was your role, and what did you do, and who were the others who were working on this with you?

Gatov: I wish I could recall who they all were. Mostly they were people within the other counties, who were beginning to put together groups of clubs, intra county clubs, or were involved in the leadership of the volunteer political activities. The county central committee and the state central committee really didn't figure very much in those days, in this kind of planning.

Gatov: There was a lot of communication with southern California, and I don't remember exactly with whom. I'm sorry. I was talking with Alan Cranston last Saturday, and told him you wanted to know about Helen Myer. He said, "She was tremendous. Without her, we never would have gotten off the ground." I asked him if he knew where she was, and he said no, not exactly, but Joe Wyatt would know.

He is Joseph L. Wyatt, Jr., I think, and his home is in Pasadena, I believe, and his office is someplace in downtown Los Angeles. He was a very strong proponent of CDC, and really helped put it together. He drew up the by-laws, which was his specialty in those days. He was always parliamentarian, and later became president of CDC itself, after Alan.

All that I can recall of that, really, was just incessant telephoning before the organizing convention, and having responsibility for the press. It was held at California Hotel in Fresno, and the press was in a room about the size of your office. [Regional Oral History Office] This was for a statewide press. It was kind of small.

It was my introduction into how you had to have telephones and typewriters, and other such mechanical things for the press. I'd never done this before, but I found it fascinating trying to figure out how people could get their credentials, for instance, and the time schedule that had to be observed about when credentials had to be in; when you had to have your money paid; how many people it was going to take to sit behind what letters of the alphabet to distribute credentials. Would we have to divide it in two, or should we divide it north and south?

Chall: Oh, to take the registration.

Gatov: Yes. All of these mechanical things were my responsibility, getting the people to handle them, and I loved it. I enjoyed trying to make the thing work smoothly with the least harassment, and confusion, and griping while we were there.

Chall: It must have been very difficult.

Gatov: Oh, it wasn't, really, because everybody was in a good mood! [Laughs]

Chall: But everybody could come, as long as they joined the CDC?

Gatov: No, it wasn't quite that simple.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Gatov: There was one delegate for every twenty members of a club, as I recall, and you had to have been a club chartered previously by the state central committee.

Chall: Already, between January and November? That was pretty fast work.

Gatov: It was fast work. Well, you see, one of the reasons that it worked was because it was done on behalf of George Miller, Jr., the official party chairman. In other words, Bradley was authorized by George, who would come into the office periodically. George wanted the thing to work, so some of the rest of us, including Alan [Cranston] and Joe Wyatt, were trying to figure out how you got the maximum number of people with all the maximum safeguards, so that you wouldn't have paper organizations there with fifty people, this kind of thing. They had to be bona fide clubs.

So we had to involve the official party, and there was always George, which was great, because in some areas, the county committees were so hostile to the clubs they didn't want anything like this. They wouldn't play their own role and send representatives too. They could have chartered the clubs had they chosen to cooperate. Many did.

Chall: But if they didn't?

Gatov: But if they didn't, then the state central committee office of the chairman was the next port of call. I don't mean that we just chartered anything. George would send us out to explore and talk to people. We'd ask to see their books, this kind of thing. We'd want to authenticate the fact that the club really was a club, and all these people hadn't become members in the last week. Though there was some of that done it was not done from this end of the state.

We did everything we could to try to make it as legal and well, authentic as possible. We didn't want it packed with unauthorized people. We made an interesting discovery, which should have been no surprise [laughs] but it was; I remember being surprised at the time. By far the best clubs came from the most Republican areas. For instance, Berkeley and this part of Alameda County was very well organized. Oakland was not well organized.

Chall: The northern section of Alameda County, then?

Gatov: The Berkeley hills were very well represented. Marin County had a very strong club, and so did San Mateo. San Francisco had some, naturally, but they came from the Richmond area and so forth. There was very little representation from the Mission district or Hunter's Point. We quickly realized that we were not a representative body. We were underrepresented in blacks and all the minorities.

Gatov: So efforts were made, but they were never very successful. It really was a suburban, shall we say, a white, middle-class movement.

Chall: And educated.

Gatov: Yes. There wasn't much poverty represented, even though members fussed about dues of fifty cents a month. Still, that's what was represented.

Opposition

Chall: Was there a more active opposition and hostility towards this new organization in Fresno than there had been in Asilomar?

Gatov: Yes, because the people who were hostile were there, they came.

Chall: They had joined the clubs?

Gatov: Well, they had joined the clubs, but of course there were also people who were officers in the state and county central committees and held other kinds of positions. I don't recall what. We were trying to make something that would not create division in the party, but strengthen it so everybody who had any title of any kind--all legislators and so forth--were automatically members.

The ones that I remember most who didn't care much for the clubs were Liz Snyder and Jess Unruh. Mostly, again, it was the southern California group. I think Carmen Warschaw was not in favor. There was a lot of suspicion that we were creating a Frankenstein--this word was used a great deal--and that this unofficial, unauthorized, illegal activity was going to swamp us. It was going to pass resolutions which was part of its purpose, which were going to be embarrassing.

Their caveats were all over the place. People from other states came in and told us that we were making a great mistake in doing anything like this, that it would never fail to become, really a sort of juggernaut that you couldn't control. Here were all these neophytes who didn't understand real politics.

Well, anyhow, with all the warnings, we went ahead. How much of a role Alan Cranston played in actually putting this together, only he could answer, because he wasn't very visible in my recollection in that headquarters. But I knew him then, quite well, and I was well

Gatov: aware that he was very much interested in this and was giving it a tremendous push. I think he must have spent a great deal of time in southern California, helping to pull it together there, because we didn't really have much opposition in the north--very, very little, as I recall. Bill Malone didn't think it was a very good idea, and I don't think Ellie liked it. But nobody disliked it enough to really do anything more than say, "I'm concerned."

But there was active opposition to it in the southern part of the state. In those days, southern California, unlike today, was very disorganized. We were the sort of stable area, and also the financial center for the party. Believe it or not, in those days money was shipped to southern California from the north. It's the reverse today.

There was a great turnover. Goldie Kennedy was somebody else that Alan mentioned [who had been active in CDC], but I think I've given you her name too.

Chall: Yes. Is she in the north or the south?

Gatov: The south. Eventually, some people surfaced who worked very well with the north. We developed many friends. Joe Wyatt was one, and his wife.

Chall: I suppose that there was a different kind of person coming into the party who might be interested in political power, and that may have bothered some of the old-timers.

Gatov: Well, I think that's probably true. They considered us the rawest amateurs.

Chall: Amateurs in the terms of?

Gatov: In derogatory terms. We didn't know what we were doing.

Chall: Which meant what?

Gatov: That we could really upset things, that we could lose elections.

Chall: Were you winning any, at that point?

Gatov: At that point, no. Nor was anybody else. [Laughs]

Chall: You had nothing to lose and a great deal to gain. [Laughs]

Gatov: This was our feeling. I can't remember now what the Democratic count was in the state legislature, but it was incredibly low. I think we had nine senators out of forty, and twenty-something members of the assembly. I don't remember how many members of Congress, but it was miniscule.

And it seemed--we were convinced--that if you harnessed the activities of a few people, gave them a sense of responsibility, that they would take care of the rest of it. They'd find good candidates, they'd run their campaigns, they'd finance them, and they'd elect them. This was the dream that was in our heads.

Chall: And were you also interested more in what the candidate stood for, rather than that he was the Democratic candidate? Was there an ideological purpose that was different?

Gatov: Oh yes, very strong. Very strong ideological similarity. For instance, in one of the U.S. Senate campaigns, a man named Dick Richards, who was a state senator, won the endorsement over several other people, including that man who was mayor of Los Angeles.

Chall: Sam Yorty?

Gatov: Sam Yorty, and a couple of others. Well, there was just no question of Richards running, and getting the CDC endorsement [1956]. And Yorty denounced the whole thing; said it was rigged, wired, and something or other. He was right, [laughs] in a sense. Well, he was going to the wrong group. It should have been expected that this would be their reaction. These were the people who came in because of Adlai Stevenson. What they admired and respected was what Adlai Stevenson stood for. That was really all you had to know.

Chall: They had also given Sam Yorty his opportunity to run for the Senate in 1954, I think it was. I think it was in '56 that he became angry, because they wouldn't accept him again.

Gatov: This was obviously the wrong place for him to be.

Chall: I had come across, also, something about a speech that Mr. John Despol had made--

Gatov: Despol?

Chall: Despol; that he was afraid of a left-wing takeover, and a left-wing in more than just liberal terms, I think. I'm not sure.

Gatov: There was great fear, among people in southern California particularly, that that was exactly what this was going to be. It may be that the people who came in from southern California were more radical--or whatever word you want to use--than they were from the north. I don't know. The north-south division was then very, very strong. I really didn't know any of the people from the south at all. I got to know some later, but I never tried to organize or do anything down there. Well, I just thought that they could handle it better than I could.

But Jack Despol was one who was very apprehensive, and I felt that they were needlessly so. But this is the difference in the temperament of the two parts of the state. I think it still exists, to a considerable degree. It's the Orange County mind I've come to call it. So if you murmured "Communist," this was enough to finish you in southern California, or so they believed.

Chall: Up here?

Gatov: It didn't seem to be that strong. And there were people who were active in this organization who were former Communists. We knew it, and had talked about it among ourselves, and decided that the way we'd handle it was simply to keep their faces out of pictures. Maybe that's hypocritical; I guess it was.

We were perfectly willing to take their money, and their time, and their energy, but we wouldn't let them near any candidates when there were photographers around. It was just that simple. We explained it to some of them, when it was necessary. Some of them had done so well that they wanted to be chairmen of campaigns and so forth, and we had to tell them. Some left. They were angry.

This was our idea of the way you would protect people who had been Communists. Not let them be too visible. But in southern California, I think the fact that a person had been a Communist would be enough to keep them out of the whole thing.

Chall: Well, I think those were the McCarthy days, too, so perhaps there were some people who were more concerned.

Gatov: Well, the Screen Actors' Guild problem was there. They were much more aware of it, I guess, than any of us up north.

Chall: It didn't harm anybody up here.

Gatov: Not that I'd heard of.

Chall: So there were problems; the fact that the organization didn't include too many minorities, and the power structure and the legislators were probably against it.

Gatov: Most legislators saw it as a threat. Miller was one of the few who was for it; I'm quite sure because he was so strong in his own district. [Laughs] Absolutely nothing to worry about. He ran the clubs there, as well as he'd run everything else, so he was not concerned.

But the others, many of the others, were apprehensive because they felt that the endorsing power, which was really the chief reason for CDC to exist--trying to circumvent crossfiling by having Democrats get together and solidify behind one candidate--they could see this as being a threat to them, because most of them did not consider themselves as liberal as Adlai Stevenson. Therefore, the club people would probably support more liberal candidates, against the more conservative incumbents.

So they did not cooperate, or help very much. It was the job, eventually, of such as Roger, and George, and Alan Cranston, and others of us to try to point out to the local clubs that they would do better, even half-heartedly, to support the incumbent. There were enough open races, and campaigns to run for, without trying to take on incumbents, at least for awhile.

Chall: Until there was a vacancy, or until they were stronger. Gradually, both sides came together.

Gatov: I have read several stories about the organization of CDC, which came out of southern California. They barely even mentioned George Miller, which to me is highly inaccurate, because Asilomar really never would have occurred if he hadn't thought of it.

Chall: Clara Shirpser has mentioned that she had been going around doing quite a bit of speaking to clubs that had been organized--Stevenson clubs, as they called them, or just clubs--and women's groups, and there seemed to be such a need to carry on, that she went to George Miller and talked to him about it. He at first was not too agreeable. He felt that they would all fade away and she was wasting her time.

Then, they sat down and had a long, long talk about it again at one time, and he decided that it might be a very good idea. So, they together, sort of cooked up the idea for the Asilomar meeting. I think George Miller came up with the idea for the title, "What's Wrong With the Democratic Party?"

Have you any other impressions of that organizing convention, or were you just too tired...

Gatov: Oh no, I was very stimulated by all that! [Laughs] I was delighted to see, first of all, so many people there, and that it did come out just the way some of us had hoped it was going to. As I recall, Alan was elected the temporary chairman and then very promptly and on schedule, as far as we were concerned [laughs], elected the chairman. We got the offices we wanted.

The whole thing, as far as I was aware--my reaction was that it was well worth the effort, and it was going to be a great thing and have quite an impact. I didn't see how you could possibly fail when you could get all those people together, and united on an objective, which was very simply to win elections. Later, I'm sure, it was put more loftily than that, but this was the objective for most of us.

Chall: The CRA--the California Republican Assembly--had been doing just this since 1938, and apparently successfully. At least, they were winning elections. I don't know whether it was the CRA, or crossfiling, or the background of California as a fairly Republican state, which gave them this opportunity to win; at least they did have an organization that could endorse candidates. It seemed time for the Democrats to do the same.

Gatov: You forget that they also had money, which we didn't have. We knew we didn't have it, and so we felt we could replace money with volunteer effort. There was very heavy emphasis put on the volunteer aspect of this. There were, I don't-know-how-many political pros, but I really can't remember any in the CDC. I'm sure there must have been, in the northern headquarters, after Roger was elected. Alan was CDC chairman. They shared the office space and I think they jointly paid the secretary, the one secretary. It was not much for operating two political vehicles. [Laughs] So they needed all the help they could get.

The State Campaign, 1954

Chall: Yes, and there's nothing better than volunteers organizing a precinct.

I think that we should talk about what happened then with the convention and the endorsements. That was, of course, not long afterwards.

Gatov: Fifty-four. It was winter. As I recall the organizing convention was in the fall.

Chall: November of '53.

Gatov: February, probably, was the first endorsing convention.

Chall: Did you have anything to do with setting up the convention as such? The calling of delegates, or did CDC handle all of that?

Gatov: Well, we were still working out of the same office, and I don't recall any particular shift. I just seem to recall more people were coming in by that time, and taking more responsibility for their areas. In other words, Betty Witkin, for instance, from here [Berkeley] was very helpful, and a young man whose name I don't recall at the moment, who worked with her very closely, and D.G. Gibson.

Chall: Who was D.G. Gibson?

Gatov: He was a black man who was in the Seventh Congressional District, which this [Berkeley] was, who was a founding member. Their names-- they'll occur to me, but this was a sample of what I'm trying to say. A man named Ray Bacon had surfaced in Marin County and was the president of the Marin Democratic Assembly. I think there was one club, instead of four or five.

He was a very strong, active, reliable kind of person. We trusted him. There had to be a certain amount of mutual trust in a lot of this; not to fabricate, but to help us really put out. We had lots of that sort of help by the time we got around to winter.

Chall: Your volunteers were really working?

Gatov: They really were--very well.

Chall: Well, this was your first important occasion, the endorsing convention. I'm sure it was looked upon as that.

Gatov: Well, it was looked upon variously depending on the point of view. The press didn't give us very much of a hand. They felt it was symptomatic of rebellion, or it probably was going to come up with radical wild candidates.

Chall: Oh, on their own the press was writing this?

Gatov: Yes. I cancelled my subscription to TIME magazine, for instance, because they covered one of these conventions--it may have been this one, or it may have been the next one--and came out with a story that was so bad, and so far off, and so prejudiced, that I remember calling up in great indignation and telling them that I wouldn't have my children reading such lies. [Laughs]

Gatov: I had been there, and their story bore no resemblance whatever to anything I'd seen. There was a definite slant against it, as far as publicity was concerned. It was a tumultuous kind of organization. It was not staid or proper in any way.

Chall: Has it changed any?

Gatov: I guess not.

Chall: When you did get there, by that time Richard Graves was already in the running--

Gatov: For governor.

Chall: Were you aware in the office that this was coming up; that he had all the support.

Gatov: We were not only aware of it, we were for him.

Chall: I see.

Gatov: We moved right into his campaign.

Chall: So you helped steer that right from the start?

Gatov: Yes. We were looking for what we thought was a good candidate.

Chall: And you found him, or he found you?

Gatov: We found each other. I can't remember--maybe you know who else was on the horizon at that time.

Chall: Well, I understand that Laurence Cross was very much on the horizon. He was really in the running, but Rex Nicholson and George Killion had also considered it. So I suppose my question is, why would the Democratic leadership have picked out or accepted Richard Graves, who had changed his registration from Republican to Democrat in order to run, when these other loyal Democrats like Rex Nicholson, and George Killion, and Laurence Cross were right there and willing?

Gatov: I don't remember what was the matter with Laurence Cross. I wish I could.

Chall: Some people thought that he was too liberal, that he could be smeared.

Gatov: This was probably a real concern. And the other two were not sufficiently liberal and could not be smeared. Nicholson I found hard to take seriously as a candidate, even though he'd been a very generous contributor.

Gatov: And the same, in a sense, was true of George Killion. He was not "candidate material," to use the phrase that was used a lot in those days. I couldn't imagine him putting on a full-time campaign, being willing to go around to all the clubs and all of the organizations, labor unions and so forth. He wasn't that kind of man.

I think that really says it as far as Dick Graves was concerned. We were willing to welcome into the party anybody who wanted to come, and he was an admirer of Adlai Stevenson, which was good enough for us. That's when I got to know Eugene Lee at U.C. Berkeley, who had been a student of his [Graves] and got right into the campaign. George Miller was the campaign chairman, and Don Bradley became his campaign manager.

[end Tape 5, side 1; begin Tape 5, side 2]

Gatov: Pierre Salinger took a leave from the Chronicle and did the press, so you can see that there was sort of a cozy little bunch of us [laughs], who'd been working together and running the state central committee, or so we'd thought, and then moved right into the governor's campaign.

Incidentally, the total budget for that campaign, the total amount of money raised was \$80,000. Incredible! [Laughs]

Chall: A very small campaign. I think that I had read--I really don't know how true it is--but something like \$2 million was spent by Knight in order to defeat Graves.

Gatov: It was a lot more than Graves had, but we had more fun, I'm sure.

Chall: I understand also that Hale Champion and Fred Dutton were working on the campaign. Do you remember these two?

Gatov: Yes. I remember meeting Fred for the first time at a luncheon in the Fairmont at which Mike Mansfield was present. Fred was visiting up here--I believe Ellie Heller had invited him, I'm not sure--he was working for Southern California Edison.

Chall: Dutton was?

Gatov: Yes. He was working for a utility in southern California. It may not have been that one, but I think that was it. I don't remember what Hale was doing. Was he working on the Chron?

Chall: Well, I would imagine so, but I don't know, because that's what he was doing when Governor Brown hired him.

Gatov: I think so.

Chall: Did he come up and work here?

Gatov: Fred? No, he went back down to southern California. But he came up north to meet people.

Chall: So he must have helped Graves from southern California. Now in terms of the Graves campaign, was it considered to be a holding action for Brown in 1958? Was anybody really taking it too seriously whether he won or lost?

Gatov: No, In other words, Pat Brown would not run, very sensibly. It looked as though it was an absolutely hopeless situation. But here was a man who was willing to go, and we felt that he had good credentials. In other words, the League of California Cities was a very solid base, we thought, where he would have people he knew in every city.

Chall: He did, but they were Republicans.

Gatov: Yes. [Laughs] But we were not that wise then either. We didn't realize it. It was hard to know how Republican the state was, because of non-partisan campaigns at the local level, and no party identification on the ballot. It was some years before I, at any rate, began to understand, who on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, for instance, were Republicans and Democrats.

Chall: That was the reason for that non-partisan law. 1954 was the first election in which the parties were designated, even though you could still crossfile, so that did make a difference. I understand that many of the Democratic nominees won their party nomination that year.

Gatov: It was a very high proportion, compared to what had previously taken place, which convinced us that we were on the right track.

Chall: I don't know whether you know--I'll just throw it out to you--but it has been said that Pat Brown did not identify himself with the Graves campaign.

Gatov: I don't remember that he did or didn't. I don't remember being impressed by it one way or the other. I do remember that Bill Orrick and Tom Lynch did a lot for Graves. I'm sure other people tried to get a slate going, but I wasn't at that level. I knew Pat and liked him immensely. I don't recall hearing anything about it or even thinking of it.

Chall: You were running primarily the Graves' campaign?

Gatov: Only that one.

Chall: What about the Yorty campaign for Senate?

Gatov: We didn't do a thing about that. Nothing! We didn't like him, we didn't want him, and [laughs] we could afford to be purists in those days. Other people put on the Yorty campaign. I don't know who they were. It was not any of the people who had anything to do with CDC, or by that time, the official party.

Chall: And the Roybal [Edward] campaign for lieutenant governor, did that go with the Graves campaign?

Gatov: To a certain extent, but in a very limited way. The office was still functioning as state headquarters and CDC headquarters, which was in with it. What they were doing there, I don't know, because I had moved, by this time, into an office on New Montgomery Street, the Sharon Building. That's where we had the Graves headquarters, opposite the Palace Hotel. On the third floor. It was an old-fashioned building. That's where the campaign was and that's where I was, so I didn't really know what else was going on.

Chall: And what were you doing?

Gatov: Organizing. [Laughs]

Chall: Organizing northern California?

Gatov: Northern California.

Chall: How did you organize it?

Gatov: We were working by county. We never did an assembly district organization job, as I recall.

Chall: Let the counties handle it?

Gatov: The counties handle their own geography, and we wanted to deal with a county chairman in each place.

Chall: Was that a county committee chairman or a county Graves chairman?

Gatov: A county Graves chairman. We had been instrumental in urging them to take the job. In other words, it was entirely a sort of CDC-type campaign, because those were people we knew.

Chall: When the convention met to endorse candidates, and Graves came in as a new man, as it were, and not an old-time Democrat or anything of this kind, was there a problem about acceptance among the CDC?

Gatov: Yes, but we tried to take care of that problem ahead of time, by working with the clubs that existed. We explained to them that the fact that he had been a Republican just meant that he'd seen the light of day. As Adlai Stevenson has said, "Never deny the power of redemption." [Laughs]

We tried to put it on a practical basis, that this man, of all the people available, was one of the cleanest. That there could be nothing possible that was going to suddenly spring up, as far as we knew at any rate, to create embarrassment. He was relatively young, and articulate, and understood the state, and was thoroughly qualified. And as was usually the case with the CDC endorsements, all the work was done ahead of time. Months ahead of time.

We started working certainly by the first of January to get the votes lined up. You could pretty well tell who was going to be there, because people tended to keep coming back. We'd go out to clubs and send other people to clubs to talk to them, and try to sell our candidate.

Chall: But when you did get there, it was still between, I guess, him and Laurence Cross, primarily?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Was there anybody running opposed to Roybal as lieutenant governor?

Gatov: No, I think we were getting ethnic about that time, and decided that we needed, you know, a Spanish-American. There were some Japanese members, by this time, from the Central Valley. We were beginning to think like New York. There, you know, you had to have a Jew, and an Italian, and a Catholic, which meant an Irishman. We were beginning to think in those terms--towards being regional, and get the different parts represented on the ticket, and different segments of the party. We did not want it to be a WASP situation.

Chall: Was this Roybal's first move into public--?

Gatov: As I recall. I don't know what else he may have done in southern California.

State Central Committee: Election of Officers

- Chall: What happened when it was time to choose the state officers for the central committee? Elizabeth Snyder was elected state chairman, and I understand that that was hotly contested. Graves himself was concerned about working with a person who was close to Mr. Bonelli [William G.] who was then under some suspicion.
- Gatov: He went down to Mexico by that time, didn't he?
- Chall: I don't believe so, but I think he was about to be indicted, or it was expected that he would be.
- Gatov: This seemed to be endemic in southern California at that time, at least we thought so. [Laughs] They just never seemed to be able to get things unsnarled, so to speak. Elizabeth Snyder's husband was considered a problem, too.
- Chall: He was close to Bonelli?
- Gatov: Yes, and she had been an alcoholic, and he was rumored to have had connections with a gambling ship offshore. None of these things were ever proven, and she was a very good state chairman. But all of these things kept popping up in the press.
- Chall: That must have been a rather difficult meeting.
- Gatov: I don't recall who ran against her, however.
- Chall: I don't either.*
- Gatov: I was much more interested in what was going to happen in the north. By this time, George Miller had decided that he didn't want to run again, as northern chairman.
- Chall: Any reason that you know of?
- Gatov: Yes, because he'd been state chairman. This was the lunch I was telling you about the other day.
- Chall: Oh, yes, [laughs] the three-martini lunch.

*William Munnell and Steven Zetterberg

Gatov: Don Bradley and George both knew Roger Kent, and Roger was back in Washington being very distinguished as the general consul to the Defense Department. But he never forgot us, financially or any other way. We heard that he was coming home, so it seemed like a very good idea to involve him immediately.

So I was dispatched by Don to Sacramento to have lunch with George, to see if I could sell him the idea of having Roger run for northern chairman. George thought very highly of it, because he could see that technically, it was a demotion to be northern chairman after being state chairman. Theoretically, the state chairman had complete dominance. Second, he didn't have time to do it, really.

By this time, we'd gotten into the idea of special elections. People were dying or retiring from the legislature. And he agreed that the best thing he could do would be try to raise money and get help--professional help--to go into the special election districts. So he sort of took this over, as I recall. He worked it with Bradley and Salinger, who would take a leave, and they'd dream up newspapers as campaign pieces, and they were ready to put on the campaign after getting the candidates selected. They worked from the ground up.

George was very good at this. He was just awfully good at getting eight people in a room, and by the time they left, they'd all agreed on something.

Chall: Miller's way?

Gatov: Yes, usually Miller's way, and it was essential, because in those days it was a "sudden death," as we used to call them--election--and the top man won. There was no runoff. If you had one Democrat and four or five Republicans, the chances of being the top man in a plurality were pretty good. But if you had five or six Democrats, you were in bad shape.

So George was the man who handled this kind of argument with the local people. He would try to find somebody with an already-established base, who was already known--who was on the board of supervisors, or a city council, or was a mayor, or on a hospital board, or something that made his name known. We were well aware of the value of name recognition, and didn't treat it lightly.

As a result, we got a lot of people elected in the mid-fifties who are now no longer in the senate. One was Stan Arnold [Stanley] from 'way up in the northern part of the Sierra mountain counties. And Steve Teale [Stephen] who you may recall, from the Mother Lode, who became a very strong state senator. Those were the two who occur to me most quickly.

Gatov: In any case, George undertook to deal with the legislature. This was a cooperative thing. He knew that he would get along well with Roger--no problem about that--and Roger was very pleased with the idea of coming back and going right to work politically. He'd given up any thought of running for office again for himself. So we had some Kent buttons printed and went into a full-scale effort to recruit votes from the delegates at the state convention. Whatever else was happening, I wasn't paying much attention to. Liz Snyder's problem I was not involved in.

Chall: Well, what about Kent? You'd already, with the leadership, made some decision. I mean, in large terms, made a decision to run Roger Kent, and it was expected, I suppose, that he would get it if the northern Californians--

Gatov: It was hoped.

Chall: Hoped. Who else wanted it?

Gatov: I'm trying to think who else wanted it.

Chall: I know there was opposition. There's something I read--

Gatov: There must have been.

Chall: It would have been two years before that--was it Sam Gardiner who was hoping to get the chairmanship--?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: --and hadn't. I guess Miller wasn't the most well-liked candidate for state chairman, so it was possible for others to run against him. I just wondered whether Gardiner--?

Gatov: I don't think he opposed Roger, but they were never friends. They were both from Marin County. Roger, particularly, felt hostility to Sam, rather than the other way around. I don't recall. Roger's coming over tomorrow night for dinner, and if I can remember to, I'll ask him.

It wasn't terribly significant, because I must say that the day we got to Sacramento, we knew we had it, and it was just a matter of keeping up the momentum.

Working With Roger Kent

Chall: I'd like to find out something about Roger Kent and his background. I read some of your correspondence with him when he was away in Washington. There isn't an awful lot of it, but what there is would indicate that he, as you say, kept his hand in, in Marin County politics. He sent money for the Stevenson campaign directly to you, so it wouldn't go anywhere else. [Laughter]

He also had you working on the crossfiling ballot measure. It was fairly obvious that he intended to do something in politics when he returned.

Gatov: He did.

Chall: And so he was keeping his hand in and he was keeping his hand in through you, in a sense. And some of his letters went directly to you, even at Coro. [Laughter] So the two of you planned to stay in politics, although you were at Coro by then. Was he writing to you and working through you because he trusted you, and you both, probably, had the same ideals?

Gatov: I think so. Relationships developed in a campaign are unlike almost anything else, in that you get to know each other under circumstances that can not be duplicated. If the relationship survives that--in other words, if you remain friends after the campaign, the chances are this relationship would stand almost anything, because the pressures are very intense, and the feelings get high, and the stakes seem great. It becomes a pretty competitive situation internally.

So the fact that we had gone through two of his campaigns, and he'd lost them both and he didn't wind up blaming me for it, I think says something too, because it's not infrequent that candidates do blame the people who are running their campaign, or doing their scheduling, or whatever. It's somebody else's fault. But that was never Roger's way.

He felt that I was deeply committed to his political future, which I was, and to the party, which he was, so I was probably his closest friend, politically. For some reason, he and Alan Cranston never did develop a very close personal relationship. A good enough working relationship, but they never went out to lunch together or discussed things informally. It was always by appointment. They were very different types of people.

Gatov: Even so, I never quite understood why that situation existed. And I think I understood Roger quite well. We lived a block and a half--we still do--about a block and a half apart, which made communication very easy, and we were at their house a lot. He had a swimming pool, and they set up a swimming club there that we could be a member of. That was fine, so I often took the children up to swim.

We saw them a lot, and he and I used to share observations about things and our interests--"Did you read this?" and sending each other things back and forth. As I said the other day, after he got back, he used to make a point of coming to the office every afternoon around four-thirty, I guess.

Chall: The political office?

Gatov: The political office, yes. By this time, it was 212 Sutter Street, after he was elected. That was not very far from his law office on Montgomery Street. He frequently had lunch at Sam's Grill on Bush Street. These would be with political people, often including me. But by four-thirty in the afternoon, I had left to go home. I used to come into the office around ten, and I would leave around half past three, so I could go home, and do the marketing, and get dinner and so forth.

So I wouldn't see him often at the office. Instead, he made up for it by stopping at the house on his way into the city in the morning, which would be about eight-thirty, or quarter of nine, something like that. He'd have a cup of coffee and tell me what had happened since we last talked, we'd talk about what ought to be done.

I felt very comfortable in making suggestions to him, because to me, he was a remarkable man for that era; there are probably lots more of them today. He regarded women as people who were totally equal with men, if not in some ways a bit better. I used to wonder about it, because I hadn't seen a great deal of that.

I got to know his wife better as time went on. She had been ill with tuberculosis when I first knew her during his first campaign. She was in bed all the time. But she participated a little more by the second campaign in 1950. Finally she went to Hawaii and was gone a year, and had a most extraordinary series of operations on her lungs, where they operated and took the lesions right out of her lungs. Of course, her body was quite scarred from it, but she came back healthy, with no more tuberculosis, after years of it!

Gatov: She is a very strong personality. His mother, who was still alive then, was very definitely a strong personality, and his sister, whom he just adored--Addie, a sculptor--was a very strong personality. So he'd grown up used to [laughs] women having minds of their own.

It made everything very easy. The one thing about his personality that I noticed was that he craved support and approval. He wanted to be told that he'd done things well. For just the least little bit of encouragement of that sort, you got tremendous returns. I think that this was the only thing that his family life had never given him. The nickname that they had for him was "Egbert," and he was the last of seven children, the youngest. He was also somewhat smaller in size than his brothers, and I think he felt very keenly all of these things.

I'm sure somewhere you've found the comment made by the secretary of the interior, Gifford Pinchot, who received Muir Woods from Mr. Kent, Sr.? He asked Mr. Kent why he hadn't named Muir Woods after himself, instead of naming it after John Muir. Mr. Kent said, "Oh, with five sons, I don't think I'm going to need any other monument to myself."

Roger grew up in the expectation that great things were going to happen to him, and that he was going to do things significant. It pained him very much when he was running for Congress that the far left, which was then his opposition in the Democratic party, used to use the fact that his wife came from Hawaii, and that she was one of the Big Five families over there [Cooke], and that he was wealthy, and lived in a town named after his family--all of these things.

He'd never come across this kind of ridicule before, and he was very sensitive to it. He was a very sensitive man. He really needed a lot more applause than, I think, he ever got at home. So in that way, the political experience was very satisfying to him, because every time he did something good, there was somebody around to give him credit. Not just me, Don Bradley did it, George did it, everybody who was connected with the office did it.

When he raised money for special elections and so forth, then he had a whole new group of people who were tremendously pleased. He had a tender ego, and those of us who understood that could handle it, take care of it, with great ease, because it took so little. And it provided him with the momentum to keep going in a really thankless job.

Chall: And for all those years, if he left his office and went to the political office at four-thirty, he must have got home rather late for dinner every night--if this was a daily occurrence.

Gatov: It was.

Chall: Sort of another job, actually.

Gatov: It was. And of course, the phone rang all the time.

Chall: While he was at home?

Gatov: At home or in the office.

Chall: And didn't yours?

Gatov: Yes. [Laughs] It did; indeed it did.

Chall: You brought up a couple of things that I would like to take up with you right now, before I forget. With respect to your relationships with other men in politics, at least at that stage. What about George Miller, and Don Bradley, and Pierre Salinger? Were you able to work with them, and Alan Cranston, as well as with Roger Kent? You were practically the sole woman in the office--even though you weren't paid, you were professional.

Gatov: Yes. I didn't find it difficult. To me, they were all absolutely fascinating people, and as different as could be. This was one of the things I liked about being involved in politics, the remarkable variety of very able people.

Chall: Men and women?

Gatov: Men and women which you came across, who were doing this. It's so easy to say they were doing it for gratification. Sure they were! Everybody, in order to do something better, if they like doing it--does a better job. There's nothing to make them do these things. But they were doing it with a zest and fervor! [Laughs] It was just lovely to be involved in. And every time we'd win a special election, it was great.

Pat Brown as attorney general had appointed me to something that was very interesting.

Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Committee, 1953-1958

Chall: At that time?

Gatov: Yes, in '53, I think it was, called the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Committee, or something similar to that.

Gatov: This group, which was comprised of both Republicans and Democrats, would meet about once a month at what's now the Franciscan Hotel on Market Street. Emmet Daly, who was then in the attorney general's office--he's now a municipal judge--was the executive of this committee. It was absolutely fascinating. This is when I first met Pierre Salinger. He came to meet with this group. He was then working on Chronicle, and he was doing a series about county jails. He thought that one of the ways to find out about jails was to get arrested and thrown in a few. So he did just that.

It was easy for him to disguise himself, and make up as something else than a Chronicle reporter, and he did get inside jails in Stockton and Fresno, that I recall particularly. He wrote just appalling things. Last night, when I saw on TV the conditions of the Alabama jails, for instance, I thought, it's nice somebody's taking a look, but there are so many others!

Pierre came to speak to us, and so did the early sex expert from Indiana, Dr. Kinsey. Pat was there, this particular occasion, and I remember he astonished Pat by telling him that there were fourteen men in San Quentin for committing adultery. Pat didn't believe it, but Kinsey was right.

So this was a highly educational exposure, as far as I was concerned. It lasted for several years, until Pat became governor.

Chall: What were you supposed to do on this committee?

Gatov: Make recommendations to the attorney general about how you could prevent juvenile delinquency. It's a big field! [Laughs] I'm sure we didn't come up with anything new. I don't recall that we did.

Chall: Juvenile delinquency prevention?

Gatov: The Delinquency Prevention Committee, I think is what it was eventually called.

Chall: Even though it was a state committee, you always met in San Francisco?

Gatov: No, we went to various places. We went to San Diego and listened to narcotics officers and immigration officials telling us about what they did at the Mexican border and so forth. It was fascinating.

Chall: So you were on that from about '53 to '58, then?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: You'd had a little background on that from your Coro intern reports.

Gatov: Yes.

Early Democratic Party Fund-Raising Efforts

Chall: Now I'm going to ask you about raising money. You gave me a program from an early Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner, and I see that it goes to some ten pages, almost entirely names! [Laughs; indicates paper]

Gatov: Yes, you couldn't leave anybody out, after all. [Laughs]

Chall: You were in your first volunteer year, because this was December, 1953. It was standard practice in those days, I understand, to have a Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner, and that was to raise money.

Gatov: For the party.

Chall: Now in this one, you were the secretary; so what does that mean that you were doing?

Gatov: Well, it just was a way of giving me a slot on the dinner committee, I think. I was working in the office, and I was calling up many, many of these people whose names are there. In those days, we believed in passing out titles. That was all we had to give. [Laughs] Hoping in return that we'd get somebody to sell ten tickets, or take a table or two tables, or whatever.

So this was simply a device. I was given that title to make me legitimate, so I could call these people up and find out how they were getting along with their ticket sales.

Chall: So you were on the phone. Did you work through area people?

Gatov: Yes. We worked through lists, and then in order to give these people some sort of something, you put them either on an executive committee, which as you can see is very large, or as chairman of different kinds of activities. Anything.

Chall: Is there any way to tell from these lists the hierarchy or the power structure or the amount of money which people gave?

Gatov: I'll have to take a look. These were people who needed to be recognized in some fashion. Well, these were all people of considerable distinction in one way or another, in those days.

Chall: Tell me about the women. On the Jefferson-Jackson Committee which is at the top of the page, there was one woman. That was you. Among the vice-chairmen, there were three out of twenty-four. There was a Mrs. Elizabeth Ryder. Who was she?

Gatov: I don't remember anything about her. It must be Liz Snyder. Betty Witkin, there she is. Claudia Zumwalt I vaguely remember.

Chall: Was she related to the admiral?

Gatov: I don't recall that she was.

Chall: Would these women have been more important and more active than the few women who were in the next order, the executive committee?

Gatov: Probably.

Chall: Because it works from the top down, rather than from the bottom up?

Gatov: Well, the men all represent significant bases of potential money. Al Brundage is labor, Tim Flynn was labor, Haggerty [C.J.] was labor. I don't remember Hart [F. Lawlor]. Frankly, it doesn't really look as though it made much sense.

Chall: Well, I'm just asking.

Gatov: I wish I could answer. [Laughter]

Chall: You must have worked on it, somebody must have worked on this very carefully.

Gatov: I'm sure we did. I'm sure we worked on it very hard. They were people that you had to do something with, I guess, that made them more distinguished than somebody else. These people, I think, actually came to meetings among other things. You'd go to a meeting of the dinner committee and these would be whom you had.

Chall: These were the vice-chairmen?

Gatov: Yes. These people [in the list under Executive Committee] were many officeholders, but some of them were tremendous ticket sellers. Bert Coffey was one. Gladys Bambarger is still around. She was George Reilly's office manager. Kathryn Gehrels, I mentioned her the other day. An attorney. There's Ellie Heller and Ed's mother [Clara Heller, Mrs. E.S.].

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Jos. F. Aleck	Lester M. Collett	Samuel R. Geddes	Robert McCarthy	Wm. King Robbins
Stanley Arnold	C. C. Cook	Robert Giesick	John McEnery	Frank W. Rose
Henry A. Atwood	Hon. Newton Dal Poggetto	Eugene L. Gray	Al. C. Meckel	Geo. Savo
Martin C. Baer	Earl Erwin	Robert H. Haden	Henry J. Mello	James W. Sharpe
Ky Billingsley	Mrs. Catherine Everett	Howard N. Hatch	Gerald L. Meyer	Lionel Steinberg
L. P. Cahill	Robert J. Farrell	James Haydn-Meyer	Joseph Michael	Jack Stoddard
Murdo Campbell	Art Ferrari	Geo. E. Johnson	Rob Roy Nielson	Robert Strauss
Ray Chapot	Kenneth L. Foote	Theodore Kreps	Thomas F. Nolan	Emile J. Trabucco
Mrs. Gertrude Clark	Monroe Friedman	Stanley Lathen	Covey Oliver	Eugene E. Watson
Les Cody	Samuel W. Gardiner	Kenneth G. MacDonald	Frank S. Reager	H. Jack Wyott

Gatov: Mrs. Edward Macauley, who is now dead. She was a marvelous person. Captain Macauley's wife. Lovely, lovely human being. She was a great friend of Helen Douglas. Molly Minudri was a labor lawyer.

Chall: Yes. I've seen the name.

Gatov: Patricia Mooser I don't recall anything specific about. Mrs. George Moncharsh--is Helen Moncharsh--I gave you her name earlier. She lives in Oakland.

There's Julia Porter. I don't remember Mrs. Annis Rock or Clarice Rodda. Vera Schultz of Marin. Nancy Strawbridge. Well, I think you'd find if you could see more of these [lists] as the years went on, that there were increasingly more women. This is significantly more than had been there before. They had come out of the Stevenson movement.

Chall: Among the list of California county committee chairmen, I notice that there was only one woman at that time, Gertrude Clark. I don't think you've ever told me about Gertrude Clark.

Gatov: She was a tremendous person. She lived in the town of Jackson, I think was the name of it; in the Mother Lode country someplace. She was a woman of both energy and solid responsibility--you could trust her. You knew she wasn't trying to put you on or build herself up, or do anything except just really be as she appeared to be. I don't know how long she'd been working in Democratic politics, but quite a long time. Even at the end [of her life], she was very highly regarded, I thought and respected.

Chall: Let's see, when at the end of the campaign in 1954, your year was about up, did you decide to stay on in some capacity with the Democratic party?

Gatov: I think I had some capacity. I don't remember what it was.

Chall: Volunteer still?

Gatov: Yes, I remained a volunteer from then on, through 1960. At that time, I finally earned some money, and then I was appointed U.S. Treasurer. But that was much later. I don't recall Roger Kent on the CDC board of directors from the First District, but I think this was too soon for that to have occurred.

Chall: But you did decide to stay there?

Gatov: I didn't decide to stay. I just decided not to leave.

Chall: What about managing at home? Did the fact that you were out all day, and that there were phone calls and interruptions when you were at home--did that matter much, or did your family just consider this is what your life would have been like if you'd been doing something else?

Gatov: There didn't seem to be any particular objections that I can recall.

[end Tape 5, side 2; begin Tape 6, side 1]

Family Arrangements and Political Expenses
(Interview 6, February 2, 1976)

Chall: I think we were beginning to discuss your family's reaction to your political career.

Gatov: Well, by this time, my son was eleven, my daughter married, and my husband was very much involved with ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] and the Sierra Club, and he'd organized the YWCA in Marin County. I think I mentioned earlier that he was hard of hearing. So he became very much involved with the San Francisco Hearing Society, through the physician that he was then going to, and did a great deal with that.

I bring all this up because my activities were just sort of one more.

Chall: In a political family.

Gatov: In a household that was pretty accustomed to being involved. Yet I must confess the telephone did ring a good deal for me, much more than it did for his activities. By this time we had several phones in the house. [Laughs] I found that most of my calls seemed to arrive while I was fixing dinner, and so we had one in the kitchen. Nobody else was usually in the kitchen at the same time, so I don't recall it as being a particularly disruptive sort of thing.

Mail and that kind of thing I handled at the Democratic headquarters. So it really didn't seem to be an annoyance. They'd have to be the ones to say, but they didn't make it plain that they wished I'd stop. I used to talk annually--and I still do--about how I'm going to get out of politics. They just laughed. [Laughs]

Gatov: They just accepted it. It was something that I did, and it seemed, I guess, reasonably normal to them.

Chall: Now as time went on, and you went into national committeewomen's activities, that becomes an expense. Were you able to bear that expense?

Gatov: No, and I could not have run for it if it hadn't been for Bill Roth, who said he had a committee--I never found out who the committee was--who had authorized him to ask me if I would run, and if I would run, to tell me that they would collect a fund for me, to be called "The Democratic National Committeewoman's Travel Fund," which he would administer. It was to pay for my airplane tickets and hotel bills.

I already had a telephone credit card from the state central committee, so that really the three major areas of expense were taken care of, but I couldn't possibly have done it otherwise. I know that Bill solicited my mother and one of my brothers, because they did tell me about it! [Laughs] And apparently they responded though they were both Republicans.

I must say that from then on, till the time I went to Washington, when I felt I could absorb my own expenses--for those four years, I never was aware of who the people were. I mean, nobody ever made me feel that because they were helping pay my expenses, I should therefore do this or that. I just would send the bills to Frances Hall, who was Bill Roth's secretary, and that was that.

Chall: I don't know whether the new campaign laws would permit that any more.

Gatov: I think what they would permit--and I believe this is done in some cases--is the party to pick it up, which in a sense, this was. But it just didn't happen to run through party books.

Chall: Yes, now it would have to be recorded. I've noticed that the national committeewomen who preceded you were all able to take care of their own activities, plus more, I suppose--contributing fairly generously to the party. I think in Clara Shirpser's case that wasn't necessarily true, but she did have some independent income. But otherwise, how can you do it?

Gatov: I couldn't have. Impossible.

Chall: Did you notice this among the other women who were in the national committee, that most of them had independent incomes or were wealthy?

Gatov: Not necessarily. Some of them did and some of them didn't. But to the extent that I was aware, it seemed to me that the party itself--in other words, their state central committees--in many cases expected to pay these expenses. They expected to pay the expenses for the state chairman and so on. Many states seemed to have this sort of a situation.

A number of other people--a number of the women, particularly--were holding jobs of some sort, that were related to politics. They would be on the governor's staff or something of this sort. And, of course, there were quite a number who were independently wealthy. I remember one from, I think it was New Mexico, who said she and her husband had oil wells and cattle. The cattle took care of Uncle Sam and the oil took care of them. [Laughs] She was a very interesting person.

Chall: I suppose this would be true of the men too, that they would also have to be either wealthy or subsidized.

Gatov: In those days, business expenses were rather broadly interpreted. [Laughs] I think that was probably how many of them managed it. I was always very grateful to Bill for the way he handled it, too. He didn't ask if I could afford it. He knew I couldn't, or he assumed that I couldn't.

Chall: We'll get to some of these other aspects of your work later, but as long as we're on the family... When you had to go to Washington, D.C. rather frequently, or travel all around the state in your capacity, were the members of the family able to take care of things? Did they mind your being away a great deal?

Gatov: No. I usually had somebody living in the house. About 1949 or '50, we built what we referred to as "the annex," on the back of the garage, which is a separate unit--without a kitchen, but it's a good-sized bedroom and bath. I was able to find mothers and children, usually, a mother and a child, I should say. Usually just one--who either were employed elsewhere, part-time, or who really needed a place to live. I could pay them something, and of course, provided board and room.

In return, they would provide certain services for the family. I usually did all the cooking and so forth, but there was always somebody else who could pinch-hit for me when I was out. And I really didn't do a great deal of traveling.

Monday, June 18, 1956

Dear Pat,

Rumor has it that the delegation may go to Chicago by train. Such a possibility impels me to take this machine in hand and beg you to consider it again.

I went along on the train in 1954 as part of the press, and I've been scouring my files for the last hour to find the story I wrote of that trainride. Unfortunately, it seems to have vanished. So I'll have to reconstruct it from the still vivid recollections.

When 136 plus people are locked up for two and a half days, with nothing to do but drink, hatch plots and make passes, they do all three vigorously. There is no opportunity for getting them all together to hold a caucus, it is not possible to counteract rumors with facts because there is no way to communicate with them. The press wants stories, and they get them, if by no other means than hatching a few rumors themselves and sitting back to see what happens. The leader of the delegation can't lead, because he can't get at the delegates, and there is every possibility for him to get off the train a lesser person than when he boarded it.

Your delegation is a high powered aggregation of imaginative energetic people who do not necessarily agree with each other on anything except their support of Stevenson. This wears thin as a topic of conversation, and an impressive number of junior-grade Machiavellis take the opportunity to form their own cliques to achieve their particular mischievous ends, which ~~was~~ dreamed up as good, clean fun in the beginning, but ~~can be~~ very hard to handle in Chicago. New alignments and relationships develop, and mostly unbeknownst to you, who will necessarily be busy in a drawingroom somewhere.

Things got so bad in '52, that finally Miller called a caucus on the station platform in Amarillo, where he addressed the crowd from a baggage carrier. But it was too late.

And though I wasn't along, I recall that the 1948 train to Philadelphia was almost a riot from the time the northern and southern sections joined in Ogden, Utah. I also recall that Nixon achieved his hatchet job after he quietly boarded the GOP train in Denver.

A copy of the article on the train ride, written for the San Francisco Chronicle is with the Gatov papers in The Bancroft Library.

From Elizabeth Smith

In addition, I gather that the railroad seldom assigns its best rolling stock to such a special train. They certainly didn't in '52. Half the cars were air-conditioned with ice, the other by electricity. The first day and a half was not too bad, though it was 120° outside. But the mechanic left the train in New Mexico, and after that we were on our own. Several cars were without any air or airconditioning from there in, and the people berthed in them carried their mattresses into other cars and slept on the floor. A more demoralized crew of hot, dirty president-makers you could hardly have found than those who lumbered off the train into the stifling heat of Dearborn station the Sunday morning before the convention started. As you know, the first thing they did at the caucus that evening was get a rousing fight started, using chairs as well as fists. The incident made almost every page 1 the next day.

I realize it is almost libelous to compare our splendid task force for Stevenson with the 1952 delegation for Kefauver, but I humbly call to your attention that people interested in politics are pretty similar in many respects, and for your own sake especially, and for the sake of our performance in Chicago, I ask that you think over the clean, quick comfortable flight, which doesn't last long enough to make serious trouble possible. That way your delegation has a chance of getting there sober, fit and with their matrimonial and political alliances intact.

With best wishes always,

Edmund G. Brown
ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE BUILDING
SAN FRANCISCO 2, CALIFORNIA

July 5, 1956

Mrs. Elizabeth Smith
21 Rancheria Road
Kentfield, California

Dear Libby:

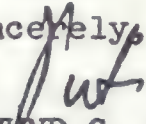
Your letter was very interesting and I agree with you in almost every particular. I am sure that there are some who might lose by going back on the train, but I do feel that the overall good from the friends you make on such a trip would more than offset the harm from a few who would lose their heads.

I noticed that was the experience of the Kefauver delegation and it is possible, of course, that the Stevenson group will do the same thing. However, when I look back to 1944 and 1948, I think there is some unity that is created by a train trip. If we are unable to get a good group together, however, I would favor flying and then having a little get together on Saturday night and perhaps one on Sunday.

I also intend to get out at least two letters to the entire delegation between now and August 13, so that they will begin to get the feel of being delegates. I think the letters should be newsy and a few words from you would be most appropriate.

I think the Democratic Party in the State of California and the United States are to be congratulated on getting your services as National Committeewoman. If, during your incumbency, you wish my help at any time, please do not hesitate to call me. You are a wonderful woman and I am proud to know you.

Sincerely,


EDMUND G. BROWN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

EGB:MJ

Gatov: In those days, I think much more than today, California was really two states. Other than attending meetings that were statewide that were held in Los Angeles, I seldom went there for any particular occasions. Most of the other northern California traveling that I did, I could get home from, so there was no particular problem.

Probably I went to Washington three times a year, until the 1960 period, when I was on the arrangements committee and for the convention that did involve a good deal more traveling. The situation was different from 1952.

Chall: So that it didn't really disrupt your family life?

Gatov: It didn't seem to. I don't recall complaints about that.

Chall: I guess there are some complaints that women have found as they get into politics. They may be for women who have been elected to office. Their husbands become jealous of their role. Would that be something that was noticeable to you?

Gatov: I can certainly see how it would be if you were in elected office. But in my situation, my husband was a sensitive man and quite a jealous man. I was well aware that it had nothing to do, particularly, with this activity. I had tried to reduce that kind of problem. I'd had to deal with it years earlier. He participated sometimes, and sometime he didn't. I never urged him to go to dinners, partly because of his hearing loss, and because he had his own activities.

He wasn't really all that interested, but he never seemed to mind me going. I don't recall that it created a problem. Undoubtedly, there were situations where it did, but they were really kind of minor. Fortunately, this was the Adlai Stevenson era, and he was as enthusiastic about Adlai Stevenson as I was, so that was no barrier.

Building the Democratic Party in Northern California

Chall: Well, now as we get into 1956, at the very beginning, between 1954 and 1956, you just stayed in the San Francisco office and did whatever was needed to be done?

Gatov: What we were consciously doing was trying to build the party. Rager Kent had come in by this time, and he was full of plans and ideas. We were more successful on fund raising. He was developing plans for Dollars for Democrats, which involved, really, precinct work.

Gatov: It had double benefits. You not only collected money, but you let people know that there was a Democratic party. This was an off-season activity.

He also developed something called the \$100-A-Month Plan. Contra Costa County was particularly outstanding in that, I recall.

Chall: The \$100-A-Month Plan, was that the so-called Century Club?

Gatov: No, that was different. The Century Club was something an individual paid a \$100 a year to belong to. The \$100-A-Month Plan money went from the congressional districts into the state central committee. They were raising the money, partly from the Dollars for Democrats division, which was split one-third, one-third, one-third. One-third stayed in the county, one-third went to the state central committee, and one-third went to the national committee.

Dick Haber, who you may or may not know from Contra Costa, was a leader in this plan, which I think had its origins in the CDC-kind of concept. The state central committee had previously been, as I think I have mentioned, before 1952, entirely financed by just a few people. The districts agreed with the concept that the base needed broadening, that it was everybody's headquarters, and did not take unkindly to the idea of helping support it financially.

The congressional districts had their own dinners and fund-raising events, and then they would send money to us when they could. A close track was kept of it, and Roger used to remind them when they hadn't sent it in for three months.

On the other hand, we would help them produce V.I.P. speakers, help them with suggestions and sometimes with staff help; go into congressional districts to help them raise money, so that they could pay us our dues. [Laughs] It was a sort of mutual back-scratching situation. But it worked very well, because there was an extraordinary amount of good-will evident, in those days. Nothing like the mistrust and so forth that appeared at other times. Everybody that I was in contact with felt that the CDC was simply a symptom of a new surge of potential strength for the Democratic party, and that there was nothing to stop us from electing members of Congress and new senators, new members of the legislature; hopefully one day, a governor. We had big ideas, and we felt that to do this, you had to have organization. So organization became the number one priority.

That meant developing people who would have the time as well as the talent to run campaigns locally for free, usually, or for expenses--pretty minimal. Registration and voter turn-out were very important. None of these things had ever--not to my knowledge, anyway--been done much before this period.

Gatov: We ran training workshops all over the place and helped people deal with their county registrar. There was one man named Van Dempsey, who lives in Castro Valley, or someplace in southern Alameda County.

Chall: What was his role?

Gatov: Well, he was roving ambassador. I don't know what his title was. He didn't like cities, but he loved the country, and since we only had two congressional districts in San Francisco, and the rest of it was country, as far as he was concerned, he would go there to put on these workshops. Really, he would actually get people all excited about registration and voter turnout.

They understood very well that if people weren't registered, too bad--the Democrats were going to lose. He explained that the average resident of California moved quite often. I think in those days they moved probably less than now. I think now it's about every third year, or a third of the population moves every year. But in any case, it was our people who were moving; the Democrats were the rootless members of society.

The Republicans, disciplined as they are, would always re-register when they moved, and they would turn themselves out to vote. The same was relatively true of the high-income areas where some Democrats happened to live. The places where we had to concentrate were the places where the turnover was considerable, the poorer areas.

Very little of this, unfortunately, was ever put on paper, I'm afraid. I don't recall us ever developing handbooks or "how-to" manuals and so on until much, much later. It was pretty much word of mouth, but really a whole generation of activists in the Democratic party at that time learned about these things and the importance of them.

Chall: Now was Van Dempsey paid by the Democratic party to do this work?

Gatov: He was drawing a salary, but I didn't realize at that time that he has independent means. Maybe he didn't at that time, but he does now. Just at what point he started turning his salary back, I don't know. In other words, he wanted to be paid because he wanted the status of a professional, but he didn't need the money, so he would turn it back by buying tickets for dinners or in any of the number of ways you could do this.

Chall: He was the roving ambassador for northern California?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: All of northern California?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: How was he found?

Gatov: He came out of the auto workers union in southern Alameda County. I don't remember whether he turned up in 1952 or '54. I really can't remember, but Van was very much a part of our world by '54. By '56, definitely.

Don Bradley was still the executive secretary. I think that maybe he was the one who found Van someplace.

Chall: Don Bradley--is he still the executive secretary?

Gatov: No.

Chall: Because his name is still connected with the inner workings of the Moscone campaign for mayor right now, which I think is in the headquarters of the Democratic party. That's probably an assumption that one could make.

Gatov: He's not in the official apparatus. The official apparatus is in a state of disarray at the moment, total disarray. But Don had been running, in the past, statewide campaigns, and then he didn't do that for a few years. He came back in Bill Roth's campaign for governor in '74, and then he managed the Moscone for mayor, and now is free-lancing. He has his own firm, Don Bradley and Associates.

Chall: For running campaigns?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: So basically then, between 1954 and 1956, you were organizing?

Gatov: That's what we were doing, and trying to make sure that there was no separation between CDC and the state central committee. We didn't want to have happen in northern California what had happened in southern California, where there were divisions.

Chall: Are you familiar with those divisions?

Gatov: I was at the time, but I'm afraid I've forgotten a good deal about who the people were who felt so hostile to CDC. We didn't want hostility, so we really wore two hats, practically everybody. We were on our county central committees, as well as on our CDC councils--this sort of incestuous situation. But it worked to produce harmony.

The Issue of Neutrality and Support for Stevenson

Chall: As the primaries came into view for 1956, there was, as I understand it, a series of telegrams in October, 1955, that went out all over the state. Are you familiar with that, how it came about?

Gatov: This was urging people to support Adlai Stevenson?

Chall: That's right, and primarily it was from the heads of the central committee and the CDC. It was assumed that they should have been neutral at that time, at least between candidates.

Gatov: Well, yes it was assumed, but they were not because CDC people were free to choose. This is when Roger Kent coined the term "Straight Wire Cranston." Alan apparently sent his telegrams--he was the president of CDC at that time--he sent his all straight message; so when the bills came in, [laughs].... Since they were sharing the same office in northern California, here were Alan's wires at the highest charge! [Laughs] Roger never let him forget it. All his had gone out night letter!

There was a good deal of resistance to the idea of neutrality. That is, people who had supported Stevenson before wanted to support him again. They really felt that they had not given up their constitutional rights just because they were part of the apparatus of the Democratic party.

I particularly felt this way. I felt that the job of a leader is to lead, and you don't do that by waiting until the constituency makes up its mind, and then rush bravely to the front and presume to lead it. I think people who are supporters of yours, who put you in that office, have every right to know where you stand. This business of neutrality among people who are in high political office is really a fraud.

They aren't neutral. They may go through the motions of being, but they're going to be neutral on behalf of somebody. I have yet to see anybody who was neutral.

Chall: I guess that one of the reasons for setting up the CDC in the first place was so that there would be pre-primary endorsement.

Gatov: They still obeyed the law.

Chall: And yet the CDC, according to its bylaws, was supposed to have an endorsement convention.

Gatov: It retained it, and the state central committee never got into that.

Chall: But the leaders of both groups, at a rather crucial time urged support for Stevenson. I think Mr. deSapio [Carmine] was due in, and was, I guess considered maybe Mr. Harriman's [Averell] front man. This action might have been taken to indicate to Mr. Harriman that the leaders of the Democratic party in California were behind Stevenson.

Gatov: Which they were. You see, the official party leaders were also CDC officials.

Chall: But was it necessary to do it in this way? You must have all thought it through.

Gatov: Well, because it was expensive to run contested primaries, and we never had much money, it must have been deemed worthwhile for two reasons. One, to really in effect, try to keep other people out of the California primary, and two, to encourage Adlai Stevenson, who in his usual way, [laughs] was not quite certain that he wanted to run again.

We knew we wanted him; we didn't see any conflict. The fact that I was national committeewoman--

Chall: You weren't then.

Gatov: I wasn't, yet, but I was--I think I was congressional district co-chairman.

Chall: You may have been.

Gatov: No, I was county central committee chairman. That's where I moved, from there.

Chall: That was the only office you ran for, or were you appointed?

Gatov: I don't recall. I think I ran, but without opposition. [Laughs] The incumbent had retired, and I was on the county committee. I'd run for that and was on it. The incumbent retired, and I moved into that slot where theoretically, you're supposed to be neutral. I wasn't.

Chall: So much for neutrality! [Laughter]

Gatov: So much for neutrality!

Chall: That did create a national flap, I guess, or at least a state one. However, do you think that brought Adlai Stevenson a message?

Gatov: It was a message of support. He could read the list of names and see that he not only had all the people he'd had before, but he had some new ones besides, which I presume was encouraging to him.

Delegate Selection, Endorsements, and other Pre-Primary Activity, 1956

Chall: When it came to picking the delegates for the 1956 primary election, there was a committee of nine appointed. I guess you wouldn't have been on that committee, but do you recall how they worked? Did you help them in any way in drawing up lists of names?

Gatov: I think it was quite similar to the procedure we used in 1960, which was quite a simple one. Van and Don Bradley and--I don't remember who the office secretary was at that time. It may have been Lenore.

Chall: Lenore Ostrow?

Gatov: Yes--had been making lists. Well, we always had current lists of people who were active within the congressional districts, because there'd been an awful lot of contact and communication outside of just the formal meetings. Roger would go traveling around, and Van would travel around, and I would travel around, and many of us became quite good friends with a lot of people outside of the Bay Area.

So, I presume what they did was to put, for instance, fifteen names on the board for that particular congressional district. Another fifteen for another congressional district. Then they had a procedure that was informal, but very similar to the rules of today.

The formula was that you want a percentage of contributors, a percentage of labor, a percentage of women, a percentage of office-holders, and a percentage of minorities. Then what you did was look over the lists to see where you could get these from, and try to balance it out. We didn't try to balance it out by congressional district, but we did try to balance it out on a statewide basis.

By and large, it worked pretty well. Senior citizens, I forgot to mention, were another category. Of course, you sometimes would have one person filling three spots, which was nifty. A rich black woman over sixty-five was just great! [Laughs]

I don't recall any particular problems about it. Usually, the alternate spots were not completely filled, because the idea was that if there was a competing delegation and your delegation won, then you would want to put some of the competing delegation on the winning delegation, if they wished to go.

Gatov: Some people were put on who we knew weren't going to go, but it was sort of the honor of the thing, and they were pleased when they would get offered a place on the delegation. After the election their spot would be taken by somebody else. There was a good deal of fluidity, and in those days, contrary to regulations today, you had to sign an affidavit and have it notarized, that you were paying your own expenses. This was quite firm, so that was an expense for me.

Chall: I don't have my notes with me, but I recall that in 1960 there were congressional district caucuses, and there were instructions to the caucuses to select people representing these categories, and submit their names after the people who were selected had signed papers that they would pay their own way, and, I think, a few other things. Then the committee made the final selection. Do you recall whether there were caucuses in 1956, or were the names drawn from those they knew?

Gatov: I don't recall any caucuses. I told you about our abortive caucus of 1952, first district and so forth. I don't think we went through that exercise a second time.

Chall: I see, so that by 1960 it probably was something new.

And in-between, now, prior to the primary election, the CDC had its own endorsing convention. As I understand, both Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver came to that convention. Do you recall that, and also the endorsement of various candidates? What were you doing, as a matter of fact, with the CDC at that time?

Gatov: I think I was still on its board.

Chall: As a what? What were you on there for, do you know?

Gatov: I succeeded Roger Kent.

Chall: On the board?

Gatov: The board was composed of one representative per congressional district, and then there were extras besides. I was representing the First Congressional District, following him. He didn't stay on it very long. I guess because he felt that he was busy enough as state chairman.

That convention, I believe, was held in Fresno, and as I recall, it was a pretty vigorous affair.

Chall: Well, the convention shows Richard Richards as the senatorial candidate over Sam Yorty who went off angry and ran for the Senate anyway.

Gatov: That would have been no contest.

Chall: I don't recall the other candidates.

Gatov: I don't believe there were other candidates, because the Senate probably was the only one that was up, unless we had the Board of Equalization or something like that, because the statewide ones were concurrent with the governor, so they would have been '54 and '58.

Chall: There was some activity prior to that, in the selection of a senatorial candidate. I understand there were members of the Democratic party urging Pat Brown to run for the Senate, because he was the only big vote-getter among the Democrats.

Gatov: People were always urging Pat Brown to run for almost anything, [laughs], because he was so conspicuous by the absence of any other Democrats in statewide office. He was well liked, and he was well liked by Republicans as well as Democrats. He just seemed like the answer to almost any situation.

But I believe the opponent at that time--well, it had to be either Knowland [William] or Kuchel [Thomas].* Either one, we viewed with considerable respect as an opponent. I'm sure Pat Brown was urged to run, but I don't think he ever took it very seriously.

Chall: I think Mr. Yorty accused him of teasing, because it took awhile before he'd made up his mind.

Do you have any other recollections of the 1956 endorsing convention? Do you recall Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver speaking at the convention?

Gatov: Yes, they spoke one after the other, as I recall. I don't remember who went first. It seemed to me that they both got very, very warm receptions.

I remember I used to try to gauge the decibels of applause, sort of like a personal applause meter. I think I felt it was pretty much even.

Chall: Were you doing anything with or for Adlai Stevenson at that time, during the CDC convention?

*It was Kuchel.

Gatov: I was trying to convince people that they ought to go for a Stevenson endorsement, that he was the best we had. There wasn't too much competition that I can recall in northern California. I can't emphasize enough the fact that I considered the north my bailiwick, and I did not consider southern California my bailiwick, even though I had quite a few friends down there. I would not have presumed to go to congressional district caucuses in southern California and work for Adlai Stevenson, as I felt very free to do in the north.

I mean, this was the situation after I became national committee-woman, as well as before. There might as well have been a fifteen-foot fence with barbed wire on the top, as far as I was concerned. I didn't think it made any sense to go where I did not feel welcome. I thought it would be a counter productive effort.

Chall: Was that something that you and Roger Kent had determined, after viewing the situation?

Gatov: I'm not even sure that it was a conscious determination. I think we were continuing, more or less, what had been a tradition. The turnover of people in southern California was considerable in those days, in party office, and in campaigns. They tended not to resurface. You'd have a campaign, you'd get to know the people at the other end of the state, and then by the next campaign, they were gone, and another group was in, with a few individual exceptions, like Liz Snyder, and a man named Don Rose. Dick Richards was another, and of course, Carmen [Warschaw] who were there repeatedly.

But a far smaller percentage of the people who would be at any given meeting from southern California were the same people who had been at the last one, or who would be at the next one. Joe Wyatt was another firm fixture, and Paul Ziffren.

Chall: What did you do during the primary? Did you go out with the candidates, either for state office, like Richard Richards, or even Adlai Stevenson when he came into the state to campaign? Were you with them at all?

Gatov: Yes. Roger, more or less, was the informal Stevenson chairman. He had events at his house, and Stevenson came there and visited, and spent the night, along with Bill Blair and some others who were with him. Roger would put on a dinner, this kind of thing. Stevenson was there more than once, and I was in on all of these events. I was participating, to the extent that there was anything to participate in. I have really, only a hazy recollection of that primary, as contrasted with the '52 one, so I just have to assume that it wasn't a particularly vigorous affair. I don't even remember, now, how the vote came out.

Gatov: Adlai won, but by how much?* I don't remember whether it was two and a half to one, or one and a half to one, as I remember the '52 vote, So I can only assume that I wasn't particularly concerned about it. I must have felt that Stevenson was going to win. I remember the general campaign, after the convention, vividly, but I don't recall that we really had much of an office for the primary. I doubt that we would have been permitted to run a primary campaign out of the state central committee office, so I just can't believe that it was a very ambitious affair. Maybe it was.

Chall: Everyone was still committed to Adlai Stevenson at this point, at least that you knew in northern California?

Gatov: I remember the night of the primary, when Bradley, who had been running Stevenson's campaign, called him to tell him that he had carried every county in California that he had visited. Adlai said, "Do you mean that there were some that I didn't visit?" [Laughter] So I can just recall that he was here a good deal, and I don't recall any particular contention about it.

Adlai Stevenson

Chall: I would just like to discuss Adlai Stevenson and his personality, to see what you were all thinking at that time, because by the time you got to the convention, of course, Harry Truman was not any longer a Stevenson backer. He claims, in Plain Speaking, that Adlai Stevenson had a very difficult time making up his mind about anything.** He found this a negative attribute, not only in a candidate, but in an officeholder. You simply must be decisive, and Adlai Stevenson was not decisive.

Truman also said that if a man doesn't enjoy running for office, and doesn't think he can do something good for the people by doing it, he didn't know why such a person would run for office in the first place. He felt that Adlai Stevenson didn't enjoy running for office, and Truman wasn't really sure how much Stevenson enjoyed people. Truman

*Stevenson, 1,139,964; Kefauver, 680,722

**Merle Miller, Plain Speaking, an Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman (New York, Berkley Medallian Book, 1973).

Chall: thought Stevenson spent an awful lot of time worrying about how he was going to say something, rather than what he said.

Richard Graves, in an oral history we did with him a couple of years ago, said that in a conversation that he had with Stevenson in a hotel room, Stevenson had said his problem was that he saw two sides of every coin and could not make decisions in the way that a president must make them.*

Graves felt that Adlai Stevenson was the most apolitical man he'd ever met in politics, and that was probably why he didn't win. I also heard somewhere that Adlai Stevenson himself had said he was neither physically nor mentally capable of running for president, or being president. I'm not sure how that quote is. I've never seen it. I just had someone tell me about it.

Gatov: I've never heard that last one, but I think I would have to concur with both Dick Graves and Harry Truman on their assessments. I didn't realize at the time how important this was, and I didn't realize that people in general were aware of it. Not just those of us who, for instance, would be with Stevenson the afternoon of a day that he was going to make a speech, and who watched him go through an infinite number of corrections in the text. He would never have a speech ready for the press, or if he did he would keep on editing.

[end Tape 6, side 1; begin Tape 6, side 2]

Gatov: I was not aware that he projected his difficulties in making up his mind as much as he apparently did.

It seems to me that this trait of his should be looked at in several different ways. He had no problem making up his mind where he stood on an issue--what was right for the country and the world, and what was wrong. He had a clear sense of moral values. He had no doubt that if we were to survive in the nuclear age, the differences between nations had, somehow or other, to be resolved.

So on these sorts of global matters, he had no problem at all. But when you got him down to the far more localized and specific political problem, then he did have difficulties. For instance, I can imagine that

*Richard P. Graves, "Theoretician, Advocate, and Candidate in California State Government," Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, 1973, p. 160.

Gatov: he'd be very tormented today if he had to cope with the matter of the Central Valley and the Reclamation Act of 1902, with the questions to be resolved--will we be using the water now for ten years, and then obey the law, or will we ignore it?*

I'm sure that by the time both the delegations of the farmers and the people who were representing potential small farmers got through with him, he would be in a tizzy. This kind of thing, what I would call the practical politics aspect of something, I think was difficult for him. I think this is why he lost so much labor support which he had, basically, in 1952; he had it much less in 1956.

But, again, this was less in California than in other parts of the country. I think, considering Stevenson politically, we'd have to just take him out of the national scene and talk about him in California, and then in the rest of the country. He had nothing like the support--continuing support--in Connecticut, New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, that he continued to have right up through 1960 in California.

Chall: Why do you suppose that is? What is there about Californians?

Gatov: Well, a lot of things. [Laughs] One of them is that there is no such thing as a political boss in California, which has something to do with it. Another was that it was Stevenson supporters who really replaced what had been the political machinery, pre-1952, so that the noises you heard out of people who were involved in politics, were practically all from Stevenson supporters.

I think that stood for something, and the fact that the only action there was, politically, was basically out of people who were pro-Stevenson. So it wasn't a matter of the governor--of course, we [the Democrats] didn't have a governor then, but Pat Brown, for instance, would never have dreamed of saying that he wasn't for Stevenson in '56, and trying to back somebody else.

I think if there'd been a strong candidate in opposition to him in '56, he could well have been denied the nomination. But I didn't know that until I got to Chicago, and was able to talk to delegates from other places. I then began to realize how weak, actually weak, Stevenson's support was.

*At the time of this interview there was considerable publicity in the media about the methods by which the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation was deemed to have been either carrying out or circumventing the provisions of the 1902 Reclamation Act with respect to acreage limitation--the 160-acre limit, and its effect on land ownership and irrigation.

Delegates Elect Elizabeth Gatov to the National Committee

Chall: That's interesting.

I want to discuss the state convention that was in Monterey in June of that year, when you were elected national committeewoman.

Gatov: That wasn't a regular state convention. It was just a meeting of the winning delegation. It was the Adlai Stevenson delegation, which met at the Casa Munras in Monterey.

Chall: We might as well see if I can clear it up in my mind about the state central committee and the state convention. When do they meet?

Gatov: The state central committee convention is normally in August, though they've changed that recently to January. But in those days, it was in August. It has nothing to do with the national committee. It's the place where the state officers--state chairman, vice-chairman, and all the other party officials--are elected. Under California election law, the members of the national committee--one man and one woman then--are selected by the winning delegation from among its members.

Chall: Right after the primary?

Gatov: Within a couple of weeks, usually, because it has to get this business done before they go to the national convention, so it's very fast.

Chall: And yet according to the rules, though the national committeewoman and national committeeman are selected after the primaries, they don't really take office until after the convention, at which time the national committee confirms the election. So you may go as national committeewoman, even though you don't have any special powers.

Gatov: That depends on your predecessor. As a usual thing, the outgoing members of the national committee, whether they're on the same delegation or not, sort of "bow out," and the new people come in, because the new people are part of the delegation which won the primary and actually goes to the convention. So in that sense, they really have to be part of the activities.

For instance, I recall that that was the time of my first appearance on television. NBC had decided to do a series, starting in the summer, and going straight through the conventions and the campaigns of two national committeewoman--a Republican from New York, and the Democrat was myself, from California.

Gatov: Somebody just dreamed this up, I guess, as an idea. I was absolutely paralyzed [laughs] about that first appearance. They came out to my house and it was all very cozy, a warm sort of situation. I was asked general questions like, "What do you think is the difference between the Republicans and the Democrats?" and other such things.

Well, I remember that started just after I was elected in Monterey. I think it was within two weeks, so even though the rules of the national committee are exactly as you said, for all practical purposes the media just ignores that, and they focus on the new people. In this case, the Republican woman was new too.

Chall: And they took you all the way through? I mean, you were on television throughout this convention period?

Gatov: I was on television about eight or ten times by the end of the campaign. They brought us to New York to NBC Studios just before our convention. Oh, we did all kinds of things. [Laughs] And then I appeared on a number of interviews on television at the convention, and so forth. For practical purposes, at least at the particular time, I did move in.

Chall: What happened in Monterey between Pat Brown and Elizabeth Snyder?

Gatov: I have no idea. I didn't know anything about it.

Chall: I thought it was a factional matter, according to my note.

Gatov: I'm sure it was. [Laughs] It always was!

Chall: So you were national committeewoman, and you were getting ready to go to Chicago. What did you do? Clara Shirpser wanted to retain her perogatives, I guess, as national committeewoman, so she was responsible for the distribution of tickets, and the kind of thing that goes with the organizational status. What did you do, as national committeewoman, aside from being on television?

The Democratic National Convention: Selecting the Vice-Presidential Nominee

Gatov: As I recall, I was immediately involved in--well, I had to go get the tickets. I do remember that. They were handled as though they were gold buillon--armed guards and this kind of thing from the headquarters hotel. And then I remember Hubert Humphrey. One of his staff people coming to see several of us, to see if we would support him for vice-president.

Chall: He spoke to you individually? Did he come to a caucus, or was it to you as individuals?

Gatov: I don't recall that this was at a caucus, but there was many caucuses, usually about procedural matters, and frequently about communication, which was a real problem even then, and as far as I know, still is. There was no simple way, for instance, to poll the California delegation, and a great deal of time was spent on that, because California is number five on the roll call.

To my knowledge, we never succeeded in pulling ourselves together at any time for a second roll call. We were never able to poll ourselves, and be back on the floor ready to announce the results by the time our name was called. We had to proceed to the end each time at the second ballot.

Chall: Was that, again, because California has no political boss?

Gatov: I don't think so. The problem was, how could you produce a fool-proof way of polling people while they were sitting on the floor--this large a delegation, where everybody did not know everybody. In other words, in a small delegation, you have the secretary of the delegation, who, for instance, could find thirty people and recognize each one, and check them off.

But we were up in the hundreds, even then. There would be alternates seated in place of delegates, and that kind of thing. It was very difficult indeed to do anything on the floor. So it meant we had to leave the floor and caucus and come back to the floor. We had to find a room, which took time; you had to find whoever it was who was in a position to give you a room. It usually wasn't big enough, so you'd come back and say you've got to have a bigger room.

It was a very, very complex problem, because we had such a massive number of people. We always went for the highest number, in other words, if you could have a split-vote delegation, we had a split vote.

Gatov: We always did. But it was not a procedure followed always by other states. This was our habit, which made everything more cumbersome.

Chall: It gets more people there.

Gatov: Theoretically, you have a better campaign base when you get back. That's the whole idea, but it certainly created problems. So that, as I recall, the first thing that happened was the matter of Hubert Humphrey versus Estes Kefauver, who was running for vice-president. We hadn't gotten to the Kennedy thing yet; I mean, on arrival.

Chall: That was immediately?

Gatov: It was immediately. The presumption was that Adlai Stevenson would throw it up for grabs. This was a well-leaked secret.

Chall: It was?

Gatov: Yes; this was the assumption. So, it looked like a good opportunity for Humphrey. Humphrey had been to California many times. He was a great supporter of our revived effort to really build a party in the state, and he was just super about coming out frequently, going to odd spots. He wasn't a prima donna at all about just wanting to go to Los Angeles and San Francisco.

He would go to Merced, and off-the-beaten-path places, which was one of the reasons that he made so many friends for himself, among those of us who got exposed to him. He was also an absolutely delightful companion on any trip. I've driven many, many miles in the same car with him, mostly in stitches! A terribly funny man! [Laughs]

Chall: So that when he talks, he really can be amusing?

Gatov: Oh, hilariously amusing! I have very warm recollections of all sorts of adventures with him. To, as I say, not the glamour spots. He was always very comfortable and happy with farm types--people who were involved with the land. He felt very close to them and could relate to them with ease, and they to him.

So, we were really in a position of only returning a very small favor on our part, being willing to support him for vice-president, I felt. If he wanted it, I was for it. Roger felt the same way, and I don't know who-all else; so that when we got to the Kennedy candidacy, that required negotiations.

Chall: What do you recall of the difference between the 1952 and the 1956 conventions, just in the way of the mechanics of it.

Gatov: You mean in California?

Chall: Well, as conventions go.

Gatov: Well, the '56 convention was a very exciting convention to me, because of my elevated status over the last one. Instead of meeting figures of the press, I began meeting figures of the political world, whom I'd heard a lot about, and hadn't met. I enjoyed that tremendously.

This is where I first met Averell Harriman. I think I had met Eleanor Roosevelt before that, but I'm not sure. And some of the people who were on the national committee--Mayor Curley of Boston and Jake Arvey of Chicago, Carmine DeSapio. These had all just been names to me up to that time.

Chall: How did you meet them?

Gatov: They would frequently come to our delegation. We had a little fund set aside for entertainment, and we had parties for any excuse. They would be invited to come, or they would ask to come and speak before the delegation. This was a very commonplace way of trying to get to know people. I was usually sitting in the front row, or something. In any case, I'd be included in a great many things which gave me exposure to them.

I remember Stevenson's speech when he did, in effect, throw the vice-presidential nomination up for grabs and said that he wanted the convention to make up its mind who should run with him. It followed by several days the film which was shown at the convention early in the proceedings--the first day, or first night--it was a history of the Democratic party. Quite a moving thing, as I recall.

Most moving of all was the voice, which was Jack Kennedy's, whom most of us had never encountered, or if we had, we had a probably negative image. I was well aware of all the presumed lapses in his performance--one, that he hadn't adequately supported Adlai Stevenson in 1952, and two, that he had taken a neutral position on Joe McCarthy. Third was that he was Catholic. This was considered to be of doubtful value.

But it was his voice--I must say he read his lines extremely well. And really, you could have heard a pin drop in that hall. They were mesmerized, both by the emotional impact of the film, which was very stirring, and the way his voice carried.

Chall: Was that a Kennedy movie? I mean, had that been made by Kennedy for his future?

Gatov: I never knew. His face never appeared. He was simply narrating it.

Chall: I wondered how it happened that he would be narrating this.

Gatov: Well, he was also one of the ones who nominated Adlai Stevenson at that time in '56. He hadn't done that yet. Of course, Stevenson knew he was going to, and maybe that's how this happened.

I would presume that simply as a political judgment, Kennedy was wise enough to realize that he had some deficits in his total package, and one of the ways to repair them was to be strongly supportive of Adlai Stevenson in '56.

Paul Butler, I believe, was national chairman at that time. He was also Catholic, and I am certain that he was pro-Kennedy at that time. He certainly was later.

This is where the national committee can affect things. I think I mentioned in another interview that they had ways of affecting the outcome of the convention that were not in the rules anywhere. I mentioned the seating chart. This would be another way--deciding on the program. What was the program? Who was going to participate?

Just as the selection of Ed Muskie, for instance--I don't know how he happened, in 1970, to make the TV response to Nixon's angry last speech of that campaign.

Chall: Oh yes, that's right.

Gatov: That propelled Muskie into the presidential race in '72. These things are seldom by accident or lot. Somebody's been thinking.

Chall: I understand that in the 1952 convention it was very difficult for the California delegation to hear what was going on.

Gatov: I think I mentioned that before. It was terrible.

Chall: Was it better this time?

Gatov: Oh, yes.

Chall: Because they needed you this time?

Gatov: We were part of the in-group instead of the out-group, [laughs] and we got much better treatment--a much better hotel, among other things. We were all in one hotel. Actually, it wasn't a better hotel, physically.

Gatov: We were in the Morrison, I think, which is no longer there, as compared to the Palmer House, but we did have air-conditioning, which was an improvement over what we had before. And we were all in one place; no other delegation was in our hotel, so we had the whole thing--all the meeting rooms. It wasn't splendid, but it was much more practical.

Then the night that Adlai Stevenson was nominated, and made a speech. After the convention, and before we even got out of the hall, we had been contacted by somebody from the Kennedy group and a time had been fixed, and a place for him to meet with anyone who cared to meet with him, in the course of the night.

I think it turned out to be something like half-past two in the morning, in Ellie Heller's suite which I recall as being almost below zero, the air-conditioning was so strong! We had a drink while we were waiting. Kennedy came in with Pierre Salinger, and Larry O'Brien and Kenny O'Donnell. He stayed about twelve minutes, I guess.

He looked around the room; I think there were no Kefauver supporters there. They [Kennedy group] knew who had and who had not committed ourselves for Humphrey. I had, Roger had, Ellie had not. Several had not.

So in the space of a very short time, we agreed that those of us who were for Humphrey would stay with him on the first ballot. If he survived the first ballot, and Kennedy did not, we would stay with Humphrey. The Kennedy people would also go to Humphrey if he were the one who came out ahead on the first ballot, and vice versa. If it were the other way, and Kennedy survived the first ballot, Humphrey would withdraw; or at least whether he withdrew or not, if he hadn't made it in the first ballot, we would go to Kennedy on the second ballot.

Chall: Now, why were none of you for Kefauver for vice-president?

Gatov: It's hard to say. I certainly never had anything against the man. It frankly never occurred to me, I guess. It may sound ridiculous, but I had difficulty taking him seriously.

Chall: I see, because Kefauver had thrown all of his votes, basically, to Adlai Stevenson, and he had enough, as I understand it, to allow Stevenson to be nominated on the first ballot, so that Stevenson's action in throwing the selection open seems strange.

Gatov: This is where Stevenson failed to be a politician. This is another instance of it, because ordinarily in a situation like that, there would have been an obligation assumed by Stevenson to repay it. He would have done what every other nominee had done--name his vice-president. He chose not to do it. Now, whether he chose not to do it

Gatov: because the Kennedy people got to him and asked him not to, I have no way of knowing. But it was a departure from the norm. The Kefauver people had not, to my knowledge, approached people--at least they certainly hadn't asked me to support him for vice-president. The only approach had been made by Humphrey, who appeared to know what was going to happen, and then by Kennedy.

Chall: It's possible that the Kefauver people either weren't aware of this major break or didn't take it seriously, because of what they felt Kefauver had done for Stevenson.

Gatov: Quite possibly. I would think that they had every right to assume that Stevenson would name him.

Chall: So let me see if I can understand just what it was about Jack Kennedy--coming in from out of the blue? [Laughter] First of all, did any of you know him?

Gatov: No.

Chall: You'd only heard his voice?

Gatov: We'd heard his voice and we'd seen him.

Chall: But you probably didn't know who he was when you heard his voice.

Gatov: We knew he was the narrator and we'd heard his voice, and seen him make the nominating speech; many of us had binoculars, because you really needed them in that great big barn. And then he'd come out and solicited our votes. This was a technique that Kennedy used steadily--to ask. He firmly believed that you only got support by asking for it. You only got money by asking for it. None of these things ever just came to you because you were a deserving person.

And as it turned out, the next morning when the voting began, there was practically a fist fight on the floor that may have been from Jimmy Roosevelt. Jimmy was for Kefauver, as were most of the southern California delegates. Most of the northern California delegates turned out to be split between Humphrey and Kennedy. There was a great tussle; it didn't have to be resolved, because Kefauver won.

Chall: I see. It was a tussle over...?

Gatov: Over procedures of some sort. I don't recall being involved in the fracas, but I remember seeing one going on. I don't know what it was about.

Chall: Well, as I understand it--I got this from Clara Shirpser--Ben Swig, Bill Malone, Ellie Heller, and Jack Shelley began to work on Pat Brown to announce the delegates were voting unanimously for Kennedy, and Pat Brown was ready to announce this as a vote. Then Jimmy Roosevelt, George Killion, Peter Odegard, and Chet Holifield had practically to wrestle Pat Brown to the floor, because he was beginning to hold up the standard.*

They insisted that he couldn't announce the unanimous vote because he hadn't taken a poll.

Gatov: We'd have to check this with Pat, who probably would have a clearer recollection of it than I do. I can't see how that could have been possible for him to do. I don't recall that he was part of the meeting with Jack Kennedy the night before, but I do know perfectly well that there were some Humphrey voters and there were some Kennedy voters, and since they were from the north, they would have howled just as loudly. I think the Humphrey people would have let out a howl. There was no way that he could have been about to announce for Kennedy. They were a minority.

Chall: I don't know at what point he was being asked to announce this. It may not have been until somewhat later.

Gatov: He may have been going to announce what the vote was. I mean, if he had made an announcement, it would have had to be a three-way split. I'm sure that's what happened on the first ballot.

Chall: There was a three-way split.**

Gatov: And there was no way that he could possibly translate anything into an all-Kennedy vote on the second ballot--

Chall: No, it was split too.***

*Clara Shirpser, "One Woman's Role in Democratic Party Politics: National, California, and Local, 1960-1973," Vol. II, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1975, p. 481.

**Kefauver, 33; Humphrey, 23 1/2; Kennedy, 10 1/2; Brown, 1.

***Kefauver, 37 1/2; Humphrey, 5; Kennedy, 25; Brown, 1/2.

Gatov: --but this brings us to the complications of polling on the floor, which has never been resolved. They were quite right, there was no poll taken. I suspect that somebody started a rumor. Recognizing how intense people get, all you would have had to say was that Pat Brown was about to announce that Kennedy got all of California's votes, and you would start a riot in the delegation. Nobody would have questioned its validity, either, because peoples' tempers get so hot.

Chall: This was as emotional, I guess, as choosing the president was in 1952, when you were making the selection then. This was where the drama lay. Have you any idea what might have caused other delegates to be voting one way or the other? Were you aware of what was going on in any of the other delegations besides California's?

Gatov: I was aware of this--that there was much less enthusiasm for Adlai Stevenson than there had been in '52. Fifty-two was a pretty well-directed vote by President Truman. They took it, and I think that he had a lot of support in his campaign. But by '56, particularly big labor in the East, had decided that he was not the right candidate, and they'd have given anything to see another kind of candidate emerge, but none was really acceptable.

I remember the Averell Harriman brief flight. Eleanor Roosevelt disposed of him, very well. By this time, she was a much beloved senior citizen--politically and personally. She got up and began reminiscing about how when she and Averell were children together, they would do these various things together, and she put him immediately in her age bracket. This was very subtly done, but it was extremely effective, and that was the end of the Harriman balloon.

Chall: Truman was backing Harriman, I suppose, by that time?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Anti-Stevenson?

Gatov: Yes. Harriman then came and left. I remember being impressed with the Harriman support, which pretty well followed the tracks of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The states that it went through were where Harriman's strength was.

I think it was simply the lack of a different kind of candidate from Stevenson. I don't think they wanted Kefauver again. They'd sort of been through that round. Harriman had been tagged as being too old. The opposition just fell apart, but it was evident that there was much less strong support than there had been in '52.

Chall: Did that surprise you, and if it surprised you, then did it sort of hurt you? Did you wonder how it was that you all in California weren't as aware of things as they were in the rest of the country?

Gatov: Well, I think it was the other way around. In our provincial way, we looked at it, wondering why they didn't see the great talents of this brilliant man, who, whatever his drawbracks, we regarded as a vast improvement over Eisenhower, who was such a do-nothing, we thought.

We weren't as sensitive to the Ivy-league tag, or the criticism about his lifestyle, the sort of loftiness. He was indeed a shy man. He dreaded going into groups of people. It scared him. I can tell you later on another story about it. He was a reluctant candidate. It was part of his peculiar personality, but that didn't bother us, because we weren't as worried about the--oh, perhaps, the Italian vote in Connecticut, which should be turned off by a man like this. We didn't think that that was as important in California as perhaps they did in other parts of the country.

We are, in many ways, much less rigid here. I don't know how to describe what turns us on, but I know much better what turns off people in other parts of the country.

Chall: When you put it all in those terms, it's remarkable that we ever get a candidate who can be acceptable [laughs] even by the majority of one in the United States.

Gatov: Well, it really is. I've often wondered how the system works but it does.

Chall: It's a very difficult system, then.

The Stevenson-Kefauver Campaign

Gatov: Extremely difficult. As the campaign went along, I remember that we used it as a deliberate vehicle to improve a future opportunity for Clair Engle, who was then a congressman from the second district, which is the "Bizz" [Harold] Johnson district today. It's the whole spine of the Sierra--ninteen counties, I believe. He had been congressman there for about fourteen years.

We made him the chairman of the Stevenson campaign, not because he was "madly for Adlai," but because he was persuaded that this was a way he could get all around the state and meet people, with an eye

Gatov: to running for the U.S. Senate in '58. This was the kind of thing that we were doing, I'm afraid, much more than thinking global thoughts [laughs]. We were speeding ahead to the next election.

Chall: This was a project of the northern Californian committee--?

Gatov: --to elect Adlai Stevenson.

Chall: But you were thinking ahead to the next Senate election?

Gatov: Yes. In other words, who could benefit by what we had to give? We had a campaign committee, naturally; but rather than just let a lot of people who didn't need the exposure in these places--let's use this opportunity to expose and build somebody. Our candidate was Clair Engle, so he went running all over the state, meeting a lot of people for the first time, who would later become very important to him.

Our headquarters were on New Montgomery Street, right across from the Palace; the same building that the Graves campaign headquarters had been in. Considerably larger this time. I even had the luxury of a secretary! This was really something.

I recall it as being a very upbeat campaign, and we fully expected to carry northern California. Everything went along beautifully until the Suez Canal incident. I remember also being aware of some rather poor tactics, I thought, that we used in the sense of using television.

Nobody really knew what television was doing, or how to use it well. But the Stevenson campaign had bought any number of thirty-minute segments, and I guess Adlai liked it. He could give a sermon for thirty minutes. Well, I'm sure half the sets flipped off at the end of the first five. He would stand there in front of a pine-paneled wall, with a couple of potted palms on the other side, and pontificate.

He was not reaching the people. Even I could understand that, at that time. I remember figuring out that it cost fourteen dollars a second to put on these things. It didn't seem worth it to me, but when he came in person, the crowds were rapturous. He had some of the biggest demonstrations, up to that time, that San Francisco, at any rate, had ever seen, and in some other places as well.

Chall: Did you travel on a train with him?

Gatov: I didn't go on a train, but I remember an airplane. [Laughs] It was amazing. We had a fleet of planes coming in from all over the state, converging on Long Beach airport. I remember getting slightly nervous, looking out and seeing all these planes fluttering around and hoping they all knew where each other was. Then they'd come down and discharge their passengers and roar off.

Gatov: This great rally took place in Long Beach. People had flown in from all over the place. Was there a Stevenson whistlestop?

Chall: I don't know, to be honest with you. I know there was in '52. I wondered how he got up and down the Valley, into places like that?

Gatov: We borrowed planes.

Chall: I see, so this was a different kind of campaign.

Gatov: By this time, a lot of corporations had private planes. Sometimes, I know we even rented them from Flying Tiger. Chartered them. So it was not very difficult.

Chall: There was a barnstorming tour throughout the state. Apparently it started in Oakland one night. On October 11, Stevenson and his team--they were Governors Leaders and Meyner, and Senators Humphrey and Gore--addressed a rally in Oakland, and introduced their fifteen-city barnstorming tour through the state.

Gatov: I remember that. They were part of this flotilla that finally turned up in Long Beach. That's where I first got to meet these people.

Chall: Could you give me some of your opinions about these people when you first met them?

Gatov: I have just a general admiration for people who get elected to public office. I thought that Governor Meyner was a particularly attractive person. Governor Leader, a turkey farmer from Pennsylvania, didn't seem particularly impressive, but we sent him to Petaluma where he was very well received.

Humphrey I've talked about, and Gore I thought was a terrific person. I just had enormous admiration for them. I was delighted that they were willing to do these things, to come out to California. Of course, I didn't realize that they were all furthering their own ambitions. I thought they were just helping Adlai. [Laughs]

I was usually in charge of scheduling for out-of-state visitors. Things like that I seemed to have been doing for quite a while, and I just kept right on doing it. Same for the Kennedy campaign. I knew fairly well who people were, and what would be a good community for certain people to go to. I liked it.

[end Tape 6, side 2]

V DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEEWOMAN FOR CALIFORNIA, 1956-1960
(Interview 7, February 9, 1976)
[begin Tape 7, side 1]

The Democratic National Committee: Issues

Chall: I thought today we'd start with your first meeting of the national committee and some of your impressions of that first meeting, and then some of your activities following.

Gatov: Well, I had been pretty well briefed by Ellie Heller as to what to expect, which was very little--very little to expect. [Laughter] In other words, she said--and she was right, in my experience--that really nothing very much happened that wasn't pro forma in the meetings themselves, the formal committee meetings, that everything was decided by the executive committee, and that if I got a chance to get on the executive committee, I should grab it; because then I would really know where the relationships were, and who was doing what, and so on; it would all come quite clear. When I went on the executive committee, in 1958, I saw how decisions were made. And she was quite correct.

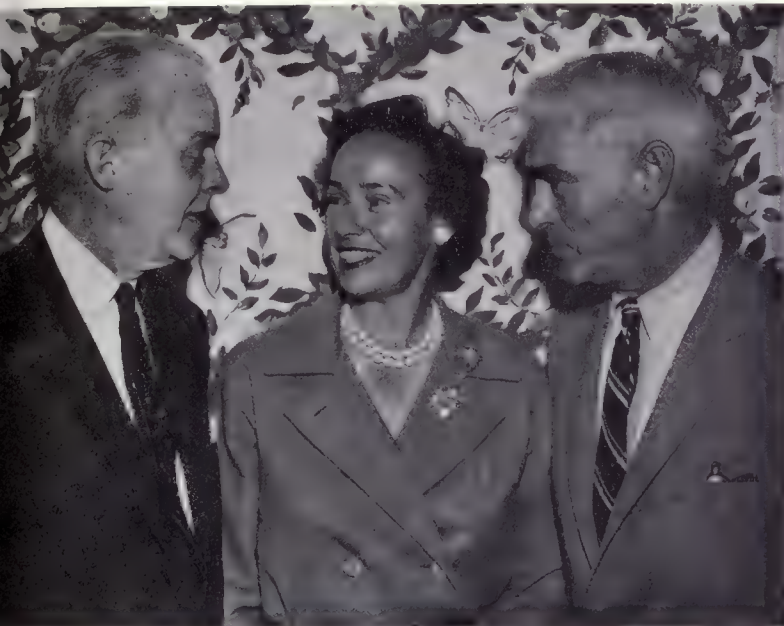
Katie Louchheim, I believe I knew in advance; she was the vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee when Paul Butler was chairman, and we became good friends. I don't recall just when she went on the national committee but she had been the national committee-woman from the District of Columbia. She was followed by Polly Shackelton, who was a wonderful person and is presently on the Washington City Council.

Chall: The vice-chairman is always a--?

Gatov: A woman, always was in those days and I guess still is.

Chall: That's the woman's job?

Elizabeth Gatov
as
Democratic National Committeewoman for California



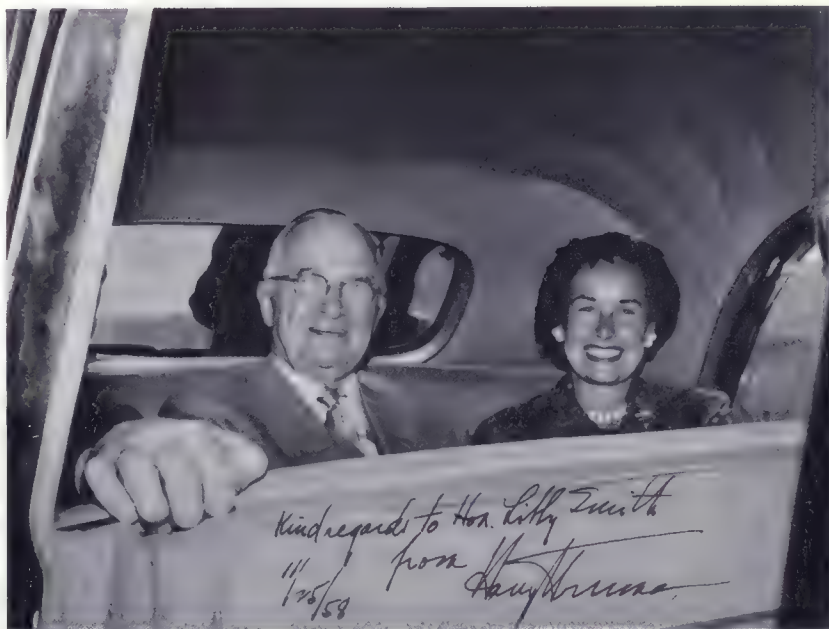
With Paul Butler and Roger Kent, 1957
photo by Art Frisch



With Edmund G. (Pat) Brown, 1958
photo by Cal-Pictures



With Adlai Stevenson, 1961
photo by Ira D. Finke



With Harry Truman, 1958
photo by Edward C. Lee

Gatov: That's the woman's job. [Laughter] I remember everything being very convivial, people welcoming me to the committee and that sort of thing--all very pleasant. And one never got any hint of the fact that there were terrific undercurrents going on all the time. It takes a little while to catch up with the undercurrents. But eventually it did become fairly clear and you would recognize what the relationships were by the votes, if you got into something sensitive. Mostly they were just pro forma kinds of things, but occasionally some matter would come up--I can't think of one now.... Well, one had to do with the advisory committee, which I believe came into being in this era.

Chall: The Democratic Advisory Committee?

Gatov: Yes. Butler had wanted the Democratic National Committee to have more clout than it did about issues--about being in effect the voice of the party; and the members of Congress, Democratic members of Congress, took a very dim view of that, led by, I think, Lyndon Johnson--but certainly Sam Rayburn was right there, too, and the rest of the hierarchy, eventually Speaker McCormack [John W.]. Some sort of compromise was arrived at and the advisory committee was created--this was quite a sterling group of people.

Chall: Yes. I've seen some of their reports and they were really trying to set up matters of policy on issues, weren't they?

Gatov: They were. And Paul Butler felt that issues were what we had going for us during this interval when we didn't have the White House. All we could do to build the Democratic party was promote issues. Well, Lyndon Johnson, as you remember, was not a very issue-oriented fellow, certainly in those days. And I'm afraid that the advisory committee would meet and meet, and confer and confer, and then come up with splendid positions, which had one press release and then died, usually. The issues were there, if anyone wanted to dig into them, but I'm afraid they really didn't have very much impact, because--well, because the members of Congress were there and they were talking individually all the time to the public. It's just as though you had the Democratic National Committee today trying to talk in contradiction to Mansfield, and Ted Kennedy, and Humphrey, and Muskie, and the other voices of the party. It doesn't work. It's a good idea, but it doesn't work.

Chall: When Kennedy was president?

Gatov: It was eliminated altogether.

Chall: Was Paul Butler an issue-oriented person, or did he do this because he thought it was a good idea?

Gatov: He was an issue-oriented person, very much so. He had not very good relationships, as I recall, with the people on The Hill. They made it pretty plain, and they did not work with him.

Chall: I see. He was an appointee of Stevenson, wasn't he?

Gatov: Basically the whole national committee came out of the Stevenson movement, by 1956.

Chall: I gathered that Paul Butler was having a difficult time, because there were a couple of resolutions, in '58 and '59 that were published apparently to build him up. A lengthy resolution of the Democratic National Committee of December 6, 1958 reads, "Administration of the affairs of the Democratic National Committee under the chairmanship of Paul Butler has been distinguished for its unswerving loyalty to the principles upon which the party was founded..." Then three more pages follow. But it was interesting that the press in the South picked up the fact that the committee, some members at any rate, didn't realize that one of the whereases had to do with his opinions on civil rights, and that created quite a controversy.

Gatov: Civil rights was a burgeoning issue at that time, and the Democratic party was by no means as cohesive about it then as it is now.

Chall: This created the North-South problems? How about any other? Or was it mainly North-South?

Gatov: No. It was mainly North-South. And this was where Congress came in again, because the chairmanship--you know, the power of the Democratic party in Congress in those days was from the South. They did not want the party taking positions that might be embarrassing to them in South Carolina or Georgia or wherever they came from.

Chall: What about one of the other--maybe this is also a civil rights problem, not necessarily North-South, and that was this matter of credentialing of Camille F. Gravel, Jr., from Louisiana. What surprised me was the extent to which the person interested one way or another in Gravel would publish campaign-type material for the national committee. These are major pamphlets here [in the Gatov DNC files].

Gatov: Well, in those days, of course, the election laws were a little less stringent than they are now, and it was perfectly possible for somebody to print these things up and circulate them around, and take them as a business expense. Nothing was quite as carefully inspected, shall we say, as it is now. So a corporation or a labor union could just add this to its printing bill and nobody noticed it. It had the advantage of looking like a very impressive document rather than something sent out on a mimeograph machine.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE

*ation's Largest Regularly Meeting Democratic County Committee
Representing 1 1/3 Million Registered Democrats*

311 SOUTH VERMONT AVENUE
LOS ANGELES 5, CALIFORNIA
DUNKIRK 8-3218

(The following resolution was introduced at the regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee at the Statler Hilton Hotel, Tuesday, July 14, 1959, and was passed by a unanimous vote. The Committee further resolved that copies of this resolution be forwarded to National Committee Chairman Paul Butler, to all members of the Democratic National Committee, to Democratic leaders in the United States Congress and to the Press.)

WHEREAS, the platform of the Democratic Party, adopted at the last National Convention (in 1956), represents the great liberal policies and programs to which our Party has historically been dedicated, and upon which our Party won its overwhelming victory in 1958, and

WHEREAS, the National Democratic Committee, with Paul Butler at the helm, provided spirited, progressive and dedicated leadership during the successful 1958 campaign, be it therefore

RESOLVED, That the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee wholeheartedly endorses and commends the recent action of Chairman Paul Butler in calling upon the Democratic leadership in Congress to support the policies and programs of our Party platform and to use their positions to enact the liberal legislation promised by Democratic candidates during the 1958 election. We concur with Chairman Butler that a Democratic victory in 1960 requires action in Congress now, and urge all our fellow-Democrats, inside and outside Congress, to respond to this call and to rally behind the chairman's inspiring leadership.

Chall: I see. What kind of effect did this have, though? There must have been a great deal of behind-the-scenes struggle over keeping Mr. Gravel in his seat as a national committeeman. The credentials committee [of the Democratic National Committee] didn't make any changes. They resolved that since he had been elected to serve a four-year term he should be retained, but they begged the question I think.

Gatov: Yes. As I recall, the problem was--and I really should read over this before I say anything more--but my recollection is that he somehow or other got elected from Louisiana and then the other powers of Louisiana decided they didn't want him, and he hadn't actually been elected according to their local ground rules. So, we resolved the matter, as I recall, in our favor, saying our rules prevailed. This was not uncommon in those days.

I remember at the '52 convention, for instance, there was a Texas caucus going on in the lower floors of the stockyards--this is where I first met Martin Agronsky, and he had cameras and lights and so forth--and these Texans were being ushered into what looked like a large horse stall. In other words the walls were probably eight feet high but then there was open space above the eight feet so you could hear them--and the arguments were raucous.

The cameramen were perched on anything they could get on to, with the cameras fixed on the door to catch whoever came out, however they came out. The first person out was an enormous man in a ten-gallon hat, the picture of everyone's stereotype Texan in those days, and he was asked what happened. He said, in loud tones, "Gentlemen, the Democratic Party of Texas is supreme." It was an argument over convention rules vs. Texas approved procedures. This was a carry-over from the states' rights arguments but it was still going by the middle 1950s. This, as I recall, was really what the Gravel thing was all about. A matter of jurisdiction. He was way ahead of his constituency on civil rights.

Chall: It dealt with civil rights. What else would the committee be concerned about that would drive it into divisions, which you can recall, besides civil rights issues?

Gatov: Well, really nothing much that I can recall. Civil rights was pervasive. If there was a civil rights angle to anything that we had to discuss, you knew about it. Of course, for me there was no problem. I didn't have to search my soul at all, but for other people in other states it was not so simple.

In addition to civil rights, there was all the preliminary work that went into setting up the 1960 convention, which of course had to begin a couple of years ahead of time. I remember a number of meetings

BEFORE THE
**Democratic National Committee and
Its Credentials Committee**

* * *

IN THE MATTER OF
CAMILLE F. GRAVEL, JR.
DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEEMAN FOR
LOUISIANA

* * *

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF MR. GRAVEL BY
Ralph N. Jackson, Louisiana Chairman, Volunteers for Stevenson,
1952-56 Presidential campaigns
William Cox, President, United Democrats of Louisiana
Paul M. Tate, President, Young Democrats of Louisiana
Richard K. Simoneaux, Democratic National Committeeman, Young
Democrats of Louisiana
Carol Vinson, Democratic National Committeewoman, Young
Democrats of Louisiana
Leo Coco, Chairman, Eighth Congressional District Democratic
Executive Committee and Member of Democratic State
Central Committee of Louisiana
Edmund M. Reggie, Member, Democratic State Central Committee of
Louisiana
Henry D. Larcade, State Senator, 16th Senatorial District of
Louisiana, and former United States Congressman from
the Seventh Congressional District of Louisiana
J. D. DeBlieux, State Senator, 20th Senatorial District of Louisiana
Fred Cassibry, Councilman, District D, City of New Orleans

* * *

At Meetings in Washington, D. C.
December 5-6, 1958

Gatov: where various cities made their pitch to us to bring the convention there. I remember being particularly struck by George Christopher, who arrived in Washington with no aide--nobody doing his talking for him.

Chall: He was the mayor then?

Gatov: He was then the mayor of San Francisco. He did such an eloquent and detailed job that people were just--had goose pimples on them. [Laughter] He was so wrapped up in the merits of San Francisco. He really was exceptional; whereas Norris Poulson, who was the Los Angeles mayor, I believe, at that time, came with a whole retinue and they had all sorts of charts and so forth and Poulson didn't know anything about it; he just presided and let other people do the talking.

The national committee wanted to come west; that was quite plain. In other words, as I recall, the feeling was that California was least likely to have an obstreperous civil rights sort of demonstration, that we had fewer anti-civil rights organizations, at any rate. Nobody thought there was much Ku Klux Klan stimulation. This pretty well ruled out a whole lot of other cities.

I think they wanted to come to San Francisco but it just was too small. Even then the Democrats had nearly twice as many people as Republicans going to a convention with all that that entailed--twice as many delegates, which meant twice as many spouses, twice as many alternates. Because the delegations were big, the staffs that they brought with them from their home states were big. Everything multiplied. And so it would require housing for about 25,000 people and San Francisco just plain didn't have it, even if you went up to Santa Rosa and down to San Jose, which they were talking about doing. So, that's how come Los Angeles. But that took a great deal of time.

Chall: And you were on that site committee, weren't you?

Gatov: I was on the site-selection committee, and then eventually on the committee for the preparation for the convention--the arrangements committee--setting up the physical layout, working with the people who were going to put on the convention, figuring out the distribution of tickets, which is another story in itself. [Laughter] There was a great deal of preliminary work.

You asked me last time to try to recollect some of the other women on the committee. Is this a good time?

Women on the National Committee

- Chall: Yes. I'd like to know about some of the women whom you can recall, and several things about them. One is why they were there. Were they there because they were really active leaders in politics, or because they had given, or their husbands had given, large sums of money. Were they quiet? Did they do the bidding of the men or the man in their state who was the national committeeman? Were they doers?
- Gatov: Mostly they were not doers. You got that impression--I didn't get to know many of those very well. The ones I did know were Ella Grasso, for instance, who now is governor of Connecticut. Margaret Price from Michigan--Michigan had moved a long way. "Soapy" Williams, as I recall, was governor at that time, and he was sort of an early womens' libber. So the women from Michigan, who not only were on the national committee but that you met at other events tended to be a remarkably competent lot. And then there was a national committeewoman, I don't recall her name--I think it was Honeyman--of Oregon, who stood out in my recollection. And one from Nevada who stood out in my recollection. But by and large they tended to go in for hats, and gloves, and corsages, and were more interested in the social aspects of it and didn't seem to speak up very much.

While things were going on in the party, at least in California, I think it was just a lot slower in other states. I used to hear about the situation in Illinois, for instance, and in Massachusetts, where there were really no women engaged in political work as we had been here, certainly not in the role of campaign managers and this kind of thing.

- Chall: Really not, even down at that level? Where here we depended on them almost.
- Gatov: Well, this was in the days of the CDC as it was emerging, and everyone from out of the state, including Butler (but not as much Butler)--what's his name, who recently died, the Connecticut man--
- Chall: Bailey, John Bailey.
- Gatov: Yes. He was then on the national committee and he used to tell me regularly that we were absolutely out of our minds to have this organization. I think I mentioned that earlier. No place else did I find a responsive chord. They were sort of waiting for this to collapse out here or blow us up or do something. They didn't believe in it. We were much freer and there was more yeast in the whole thing, I guess because we had practically no one in power, nobody in office,

- Gatov: which I think tended to make it possible for us to move in our own ways, more freely. Other states, who had governors, and senators, and so on, I don't think would have encouraged it. I realize now that this was undoubtedly an inhibiting factor in other states.
- Chall: They also had strong party control in other states. It's interesting that Ella Grasso was a protégée of John Bailey and yet she has come to the fore as a woman political leader.
- Gatov: She was a very political person then, and later she became secretary of state in Connecticut, and then went to Congress, and to the statehouse.
- Chall: How did the other men, then, the national committeemen look upon the few of you women who were active? Does "active" mean that you were also outspoken?
- Gatov: Yes, if necessary. I personally was never much given to protracted dialogue on a subject. If you can get it settled in five minutes, why take fifteen? My colleague, Paul Ziffren, was very articulate and quick to his feet, and unless something had been left out altogether, I wasn't awfully interested in contributing to the conversation. Usually things got said pretty fast. In committees I tended to participate a great deal more but I didn't do much in the whole committee.
- Chall: And the other women?
- Gatov: I don't recall them as being particularly involved in the dialogue, on the floor.
- Chall: I noticed that in the few major committees (that I saw among your papers) that generally they were equally divided between men and women.
- Gatov: This is one of the interesting things to me about the national committee, that it is that way, and apparently it always has been, as long as it has existed. And of course the state party is too. This was the work of Hiram Johnson, way back in 1911 or '12, when he reorganized both parties and had them set up on a Noah's Ark principle. [Laughter]
- Chall: But the fact that most of the women who came from their states were nondoers, that it was an honorary position, means that the dialogue...
- Gatov: Emma Guffey--
- Chall: Was Emma Guffey still on the committee?

- Gatov: She still was, and she was not one to let anything go by without comment. She was a remarkable woman. Dave Lawrence was the governor [of Pennsylvania] and the national committeeman, and he appeared to defer to her. He knew it meant a lot to her; she had spent her life trying to improve the lot of women.
- Chall: Yes. She had.
- Gatov: And he would almost push her up. I remember her very vividly as one who did participate a good deal.
- Chall: But the activity--not just articulating and talking--the major work of the committee was probably done by the men on the committee, then?
- Gatov: I think so.
- Chall: How did you get along with Paul Ziffren? Did you have to work out a modus vivendi after a while? Did he defer to you, at least at the northern state level?
- Gatov: I don't recall having any particular problems with him, certainly not at that time. I did later. Paul was, and is, a very competent politician. There wasn't much for us to quarrel about, number one, and, number two, he could see the advantage of having us work in harmony rather than in disharmony. I suspect that that's one of the reasons that I was put on, for instance, the site-selection committee. Why leave it to chance that I could get angry, for instance, and call a press conference and chew him out? No need for that. And he was, without question, Paul Butler's strongest supporter--I think in the country--and raised money. He was really a very firm advocate of all the things that Butler wanted.
- Chall: Does that mean he was a Stevenson man? Or was there anything special?
- Gatov: Yes. Paul was ambitious.
- Chall: For what? Graves in his oral history describes Ziffren as a political man who has no wish to govern, a master.
- Gatov: No wish to govern?
- Chall: Right.
- Gatov: I think that's true. (I hope I won't say anything I don't mean to say.) Paul Ziffren came out of the Chicago operation of Jake Arvey, and it basically had the concept that people go into politics for a variety of reasons, chief of which is to improve their status, personal status. In other words if a lawyer went into politics he did it with the

Gatov: expectation of getting clients for whom he could do things. This is not exceptional. I think it's all over the place, still. Paul I think was one of those people. He was a tax attorney and to the extent that he could expedite things--I think that's what he expected and I think that's what he was in politics for. I don't think that he was a (quote) good-government, sort of League of Women Voters product at all. He was an expert mechanic who understood how you push political buttons to get what you want. It was very important to him and he has prospered, very handsomely.

Chall: Was he a liberal--on the liberal side?

Gatov: Yes, very much so, and that's where it was in California. That's where the buttons were in California. There was no possibility of a conservative Democrat getting to be governor. In other words, it was fully expected that Pat Brown was going to be a candidate for governor, whenever the opportunity came. It was almost like a script unfolding to have that come about. And there was Paul, a strong supporter. Gene Wyman did very much the same sort of thing, and I think you'll find that Chuck Manatt and his law firm were engaged in very smiliar kinds of activities. In other words, if you have a legal problem and it involves politics in any way you go to the people who know how politics works--I would think. I think to that extent that was Paul Ziffren's basis.

Chall: I noticed that in your letters Paul Butler would write a letter addressed to both of you, the heading was even to the two of you.

Gatov: To Roger Kent and me?

Chall: No, to Paul Ziffren and you. I wondered if that had come about through your insistence in any way, or whether it had just come about?

Gatov: I think it just came about. I haven't seen any of the letters lately. I don't know what they would be about particularly.

Chall: They were just about the usual kinds of things, nothing special, but what interested me is that he addressed them to both of you. I recall that when Clara Shirpser was national committeewoman he would address most of his correspondence to Paul Ziffren and frequently she was just left up here wondering very often what was going on and she complained a great deal about this.

Gatov: Didn't he even send her copies?

Chall: No, as a rule he wouldn't even let her know when he was coming into the state. She thought this was not correct. So, I don't know if it was a result of that kind of background that he...

Gatov: It may be. I don't recall asking him to do it. I wouldn't have known enough--I wouldn't have known that he hadn't done it. I think I just took it as a matter of course that this was an easy way to let both of us know the same things.

Elizabeth Gatov's Activities

Chall: I guess perhaps he learned from experience. But whatever happened, I found it interesting to note the difference.

What about your specific assignments aside from your committee assignments, like site selection, of course, and some credential committee work? What were you expected to be doing in California and what did you do?

Gatov: I wondered about that after I got elected to the committee: What was a national committee person supposed to do? I discovered, as I guess many have, that they're not supposed to do anything. They can do as much or as little as they like. You pretty quickly found out, looking around at other members of the committee, those who had a good working relationship with the state party were able to do quite a lot and worked in tandem with the state chairmen, or the women's chairman, or whatever the set-up was. Whereas those who did not, who were just sort of fixtures there or came in from some other approach than the party itself, tended not to be able to do anything--or not to do anything. I shouldn't say "not to be able" maybe they didn't want to do anything.

But it didn't seem to me that there was any automatic obligation other than to attend meetings of the national committee. Who you communicated with after that was your business. You did not necessarily send out newsletters. There was no clear-cut job description. But for me it was a simple thing, because of the relationships I had with the state party people.

Chall: Yes. In other words, you more or less continued doing what you'd been doing before?

Gatov: Working with Pat.

Chall: Yes. And working with Roger Kent, concentrating primarily in northern California. I notice that you were called upon to go out and speak in other parts of the state and even in other parts of the United States, mainly in the West I think. You did give speeches, and did you also do more in terms of organizing dinners, like the Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner, or would you have done all that anyway?

Gatov: Well, that's what I did before I moved on to the national committee, and I just kept right on doing it, but we had more people involved by this time. This is when Ann Eliaser, Jane Morrison, and some of these other names you are familiar with came into the picture.

Roger, as I recall, revived something called the Western States Conference. The hope--the dream--of that effort was that somehow or other we would be able to get a coalition of western congressmen, and senators, and governors who could act as a bloc on certain issues, just as the southern congressmen and senators acted as a bloc. We were very fed up with the South, as a matter of fact, at that time. We regarded them as obstructionists. We felt that they were just holding us back, holding the whole country back. I recall having considerable impatience with the southern point of view, which was pretty much, you know, don't rush things, everything will come out all right in the end--just give it another hundred years and we won't have any more problems.

This device, the Western States Conference, was conceived but never materialized in the sense that we hoped it would because a few legislators would arrive, but not nearly enough. However, it was a very useful vehicle because at least it got the members of the party, if not the orchestrators, together periodically in such places as Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, and Albuquerque, and Seattle. We had frequent meetings. Usually we argued about money, and how to raise it. Some states were very bad.

I also learned that some states paid their state chairman, practically hired state chairmen--quite different from our setup. Fund raising was very frequently the topic. We passed resolutions too, of course, and mailed those to the senators and congressmen.

Chall: They [the legislators] didn't at that time (I don't know whether things have changed or will change), but they didn't feel, as I understand it, that they owed a great deal to the party. They became elected because of whatever they did to get into office.

Gatov: I don't think anything has changed now.

Chall: So they didn't have to take anything--any ideas, issues, stands--from party workers, and they let you know it. How much control did legislators have over the selection of the nominee for president?

Gatov: They tended not to take much of a part in the presidential elections or in the selection of presidential candidates, feeling that whatever they did they would make somebody very angry. When we get to 1960 I'll tell you some really very funny stories about that situation, as it

Gatov: related to people in elective office. They tend not to participate particularly. The Speaker of the House was chairman of the convention.

Chall: Is that always? Or was that because it was Sam Rayburn?

Gatov: I think it probably always happened. I don't really recall in recent years, except that it did not happen in 1960. I don't remember in 1972. Carl Albert--I remember being up there briefly, looking terrified, and that was the last we saw of him. Larry O'Brien ran most of the convention, I believe. He was then the national chairman. Back to this point we were talking about. The convention runs on the rules of the House, not Robert's Rules of Order. This comes out in a little handbook every four years to tell you what's going on.

Chall: You don't really pay attention to it if you don't want to. [Laughter]

Gatov: Exactly. With the Speaker running things, it can be pretty arbitrary.

The Women's Division

Chall: Were you expected to coordinate with Katie Louchheim and with the state women's division? Were you expected to be in any way interested in the women's role in politics?

Gatov: Yes, and it was very easy for me because I didn't want the women's role. So it was easy for me to cooperate with whoever was carrying that burden. The reason was that I basically disapproved of the women's division. First of all, look at what happened to Republican women in those days; they were not included in anything because they had their own operation. They would meet and pass resolutions and be ignored, regularly. Finally they'd sometimes get angry and they'd have a press conference and blow their tops, and pretty soon get put down quite firmly by the regular party officials, who tended to be the men. I couldn't see that this advanced anything, the cause of women or the issues we were interested in.

There weren't any sexist issues in those days particularly. Civil rights was a color one a lot more than a sex one. None of the more modern issues of job equality, abortion, and so on were there. There was nothing to separate us. I really felt that it was a mistake for women to let themselves get put off into a separate organization, where they wouldn't be automatically aware of what happened, where they wouldn't be a working function of the regular organization. I didn't believe in separation. I didn't think separate was equal at all.

Chall: Now in the terms of the Republican party, the California and the National Federation of Republican Women were distinctly separate because that's what they wanted to be, but within the Republican State Central Committee there was a women's division of some kind. What about the women's division in the Democratic party in this state? Was it separate?

Gatov: It was never very separate, because most of the women who were in it were also club [CDC] members, or members of the state central committee, or something like that. They were not separated out. Basically they would do certain specific things. They usually, one, raised money and, two, they did do things at the local level particularly with women who, the women's division leaders said, were much too shy, too unaccustomed to competing with men--not competing, but dealing with men on an equal basis--to feel comfortable in a mixed situation. So they give them things to do that they felt would otherwise not get done if they didn't have their own framework within which to do it. Eleanor Fowle, who is Alan Cranston's sister, I think to this day feels very much that same way. She was a state women's chairman and we used to talk about it a great deal. We never agreed on this.

Chall: What if you didn't have a women's division? Do you envision that as many women would be participating in politics? Maybe now they would be, but at that time would they? Maybe they were right.

Gatov: They probably were right and I was wrong. But it seemed to me that as long as we were willing to accept separate status we were going to have secondary status, and I didn't think that was the way to go. At the local level there was never any dearth of women. What there was a dearth of was men, who would do anything; they would lend their names. [Laughter] You know, you would have two co-chairmen and you would get the man for the name and the woman for the work. And this was accepted procedure. Of course they did participate in fund raising and that was helpful. They were, as I think I've described before, basically a middle-class, white organization. These were women who were not employed. We were drawing on a tremendous reservoir, and they could recruit the shy, retiring types to come into the headquarters and, in those days, address envelopes and other such things that are no longer done there--whatever people say, it just isn't any longer done. That work is mostly automated.

Chall: You were mainly recruiting the chairmen for party work in the communities, whether they were men or women, if you were looking for precinct or community organizers--a very different job from what the women's division was doing.

Gatov: Very.

Chall: You were staffing the volunteers or raising some funds with luncheons or things of this kind?

Gatov: They had marvelous lists. I used to work closely in the recruiting business with Van Dempsey and Don Bradley, both of whom knew vast amounts about what was available in the different communities in the ~~state~~. It was their job to keep track of these people so that we would have a pool from which to draw candidates for partisan office out of nonpartisan offices. They knew who the Democrats were on the boards of supervisors, the city councils, the school boards, and such. They also knew who previous campaigns had brought forth in leadership talent. So it was a relatively easy job, when you were going into a statewide campaign. I just got on the telephone and helped get things going. And that brings me to the '58 campaign. We should talk about that.

Chall: I want to get to that, but I just want to finish a couple of other things I have on my mind. When you were national committeewoman, were you ever approached by Alice Paul, the head of the Woman's Party, to help her lobby for the ERA?

Gatov: Not that I recall.

Chall: Emma Guffey Miller didn't...?

Gatov: Oh, yes, she recruited me. Yes indeed. I joined.

Chall: The Woman's Party?

Gatov: The Woman's Party, yes. But, you know, you did it because it would make her happy. It was not going anywhere, in those days, I didn't feel. But perhaps I had my blinders on. I always thought that a lot of those fracture groups are not half as strong as a good, large segment of a big organization, which I feel the Democratic party to be.

Chall: The Democratic party was doing what about the rights of women?

Gatov: Nothing, at that time. The background had not yet developed. In other words, the environment wasn't right for an equal rights amendment--yet. I think before you can correct a problem, you have to be aware that it exists, and that awareness was not there yet.

Speeches, Appointments, and Other Matters

Chall: Do you like giving speeches?

Gatov: I hated it. It scared me to death! I remember the first speech I had to give was to introduce Roger Kent in his own living room to about fifteen people, and would you believe that I wrote it out! It was all on a 3 x 5 card and I had so little confidence that I would be able to get one word connected to the next one that I literally wrote out: "Ladies and gentlemen I want to introduce Roger Kent, our candidate for Congress."

Chall: You improved with time, I assume, because I have seen some of your speeches among your papers--apparently you did learn how.

Gatov: I learned how but it was always, you know, with knots in the stomach. But I'd learned about Miltown, which was a great help in my television experience. That's where I learned about Miltown, and then I found if I took one Miltown about half an hour before I was to give my speech I could get up without as much quaking. Once I got going I was comfortable, but oh, the anticipation!

Chall: Now you corresponded with our state legislators, I noticed, at one point asking them whether they were coming in for Easter vacations and if there was anything you could do for them. Was one of your activities to keep in touch with the congressmen and did you do that more than you might have if you hadn't been a national committeewoman?

Gatov: Yes. In other words, I did try to figure out what to do with this job now that I had it. Not being wealthy--which you know, had to be a factor in my thinking--I couldn't make large campaign contributions to them. So I had to figure out some other way to be useful. I really regarded the office as a service bureau for the volunteers in the party and the officeholders, to the extent that we could do something for them. One of the things that we did do was arrange for out-of-state governors and senators and so on to come into the congressional districts and help raise money. This was a real service and they appreciated that.

[end Tape 7, side 1; begin Tape 7, side 2]

Chall: What about the power aspects of the position? There were letters to you, and letters from you, mainly, to Pat Brown, but there were others, saying that so-and-so would be a very good person to be on a state board or commission. Many of these kinds of letters were addressed to you as the national committeewoman, which meant that they were appealing

Chall: to you as a member of the national committee, rather than just anybody else. Somebody wanted to be on the board of directors of District 1A of the Agriculture Association. And there were judgeships. Would you have been asked to do the same things had you not been a national committeewoman?

Gatov: No, no, I don't think so. I think they came because I was on the national committee, which was presumed to be a status symbol. In other words, they thought if I wrote a letter on that stationery it would get more attention than if I wrote it on my personal stationery. I presume it was just that simple.

Chall: And how do you feel about that?

Gatov: I had a pretty good system worked out. I felt that I couldn't really refuse anybody who had a legitimate claim on an office, nor could I be responsible for people I didn't know, or knew very slightly. So I used to attach, with a paperclip, a little handwritten note to whoever the letter was going to, in this case Pat Brown, the governor--in many cases later to the president, whoever it might be addressed to, saying this letter is sent at the request of the subject. This in essence said, I really don't know whether this person is any good or not, but I am just fulfilling a function, and if you have any interest, you follow on from there.

I couldn't be personally responsible for all these people, who immediately when we had a governorship, and immediately when we got a president for the first time in years, wanted jobs. I didn't have the staff--I didn't have any staff, you know--I didn't have the ability to research them. That had to be done by some other group.

Chall: But at least you got the name to the person.

Gatov: I got the name of the person wanting the job to whoever the appointive power was.

Chall: I suppose that's a help when they're screening thousands of jobs. It's one way that it comes before them to be considered.

Gatov: When I knew the person, then the little sheet of paper was not attached and it became a very different kind of letter--or a phone call.

Chall: How much power there was in it I don't know, but I suppose in some case it did mean some power.

Gatov: It was part of a screening process, really, the way I regarded it, and one of the conduits available to hopefully get good people in office. I still, twenty-five years later, believe that good appointments are

ABOLITION SPEECH 1

I had hoped to present to you this noon some of the very heartening evidence available, which strongly indicates that if we do anything like a good job in November, we will carry this state for the presidential nominee.

But November is quite a ways off, and there is another matter which is very much on the minds of thoughtful people in California. It is the question of the Death Penalty.

While I entertain no great hope that the Legislature will repeal it at this special session, for several reasons, I do believe we should let our Representatives in Sacramento know about it, if we approve the Governor's message. It is my information that people opposed to repeal of the Death Penalty are being quite articulate about it and that the Legislative mail is running about 50-50. It is my suggestion that we do what we can to tip that balance. Mail from within his district carries far more weight with a Legislator than resolutions adopted at a statewide meeting. The Governor's responsibility in this matter has been very heavy. In my opinion, he has met it with courage and conscience. Let's tell him so, if we agree with him,--and let our Legislators know it too.

And now rather than subject you to some original thinking of my own on the pros and cons of the Death Penalty in California, I would like to give you a brief resume of the Legislative efforts at repeal. A few figures, and then some of the arguments made by Attorney General Mosk when he testified before the Assembly Judiciary Committee, about a year ago today.

Pages 1 and 4 of a 5-page speech on the abolition of the death penalty, delivered by Elizabeth Gatov, in spring, 1960, to a Democratic party group. Data used provided by the office of Attorney General Stanley Mosk. Entire speech with Gatov papers in The Bancroft Library.

man was put to death for a murder he did not commit. Then the State abolished the Death Penalty.

The Economic objection that it is cheaper to execute a man than to keep him in prison is simply not true, and I have the figures to prove it, but not the time. The item which eats up the taxpayers dollars is not room and board in prison, but the cost of fighting repeated appeals, etc.

This seems to reduce the issue to deterrence. Well, most of the available studies on the Death Penalty indicate it is no deterrent. It has been pointed out many times that the State of Georgia, which inflicts the Death Penalty, has the highest homicide rate in America, whereas Rhode Island, which has abolished it, has an extremely low rate. If this seems an unfair comparison, take Michigan with no Death Penalty,--it compares favorably with its neighbors Indiana and Illinois. Wisconsin, with no Death Penalty, has by far the lowest rate of homicide of any of the Mid-western States.

The theme of another study was that if the Death Penalty had any deterrent value it would be at the time the death sentence is imposed after a sensational murder case. Yet, after measuring a great deal of data before and after such an event, there was no significant increase or decrease in the murder rate.

I sincerely believe that mankind and organized society have progressed to the stage where they should use scientific techniques, rather than extermination, for punishment. On the basis of morality, ethics, and humanity, we should adhere to rehabilitation of the individual as the motivation of penology.

A Massachusetts Commission of the Governor in 1958 concluded 'there is no moral justification for the state to take life.' 'The factors that determine to what charge a defendant may plead, and on what charge he may be tried and convicted, are so much affected by the circumstances of time, place, and persons, that whether the offender is sentenced to death or to life imprisonment, depends not upon his dangerousness, nor his culpability, but on the vagaries of change.'

Gatov: good politics. I think it makes a tremendous difference, to the image of the person who has the appointive power what sorts of appointments he makes. I think we are seeing it in George Moscone now, as mayor [of San Francisco]. Certainly Governor Brown [Edmund G. Brown, Jr.] is being mostly helped, it seems to me, by the diversity of people that he is appointing. I think it makes a great difference to the executive, so I took it pretty seriously.

Chall: I see. Would Roger Kent, when he was the state chairman and vice-chairman in northern California, be sent similar kinds of requests?

Gatov: Oh yes, and probably far more. Judgeships, for instance, are something of particular interest to lawyers and there are a lot of lawyers, and he was one. And he had ways of finding out, so I'm sure that he had infinitely more of that than I did.

Chall: Did you have any particular relationships with the press? Did they come to you to find out what was going on at any time? Did you hold press conferences on your own?

Gatov: As little as possible. I didn't like those either. [Laughter] Usually I only did them on behalf of a candidate, or to introduce a candidate, or a visiting VIP, or something of that sort. But occasionally, with other women candidates in the state, even for non-partisan office, we'd get a group together and I would be part of it. I would explain why they were running and introduce them, and wasn't it a great thing to have these fine women running.

But I had no particular desire, that I can recall, to go off by myself. I believe that you don't get anywhere in politics unless an awful lot of people will cooperate with you anyway. To just go off and do a solo is a meaningless gesture unless you've got built-in support for where you're trying to go. Without constantly working on the building, whatever you are trying to bring about, is not likely to be achieved. This is the way it looks to me. I think this is the essence of politics, really, to be able to persuade many others of your views and gradually get the snowball effect going. At that time the snowball was civil rights. That was the snowball.

Chall: I noticed in some of the papers I have seen that you would occasionally have a press clipping, or somebody would send you a copy of a speech from the Congressional Record. Did you have someone who was sending you clippings from The New York Times, or were you taking The New York Times and clipping it?

Gatov: I grew up on The New York Times, and it's just a habit. I did then what I still do, subscribe to the Sunday New York Times and then if there was something that we heard about on the radio or something, it was easy to

Gatov: get to a downtown hotel to buy the daily New York Times if there seemed to be something in it of interest. No I didn't subscribe to any service at all.

Chall: The clippings--one for example--this was before 1960--had to do with the recognition of the Republic of China. Were you interested in this?

Gatov: Very much so, because the Young Democrats and the CDC were well into the recognition of China. And I had my own personal interests in China, and just the basic feeling that it was absolutely idiotic to ignore a quarter of the globe--how can you ignore a quarter of the globe?--for your own self-interest? So I was interested.

Chall: Now, if you clipped that kind of an article it meant to me that you were interested in the subject, and if you were interested in it enough to feel that our policy was wrong would you ever have made statements of that kind when you were giving speeches?

Gatov: Yes. I would usually have based it on an economic motive. San Francisco, as a port, had lost a great deal of business when we cut ourselves off from China. I learned (and Senator Engle learned) that this was a very popular issue. It wasn't popular nationally, but locally it certainly was. So, far more on the basis of simple economics, an expression of the idea that it would be good for us if we would some day wise up and recognize China and get back to business with her.

Chall: You were using it as an educational policy--

Gatov: --rather than a matter of philosophy. It was hopefully just strict self-interest.

Chall: Somebody sent you a copy of the Congressional Record--a speech made by Mike Mansfield at a Democratic victory dinner in Washington, D.C., and in pencil it said, along the margin, "as labored and bad as I'd expect."

Gatov: [Laughter] I wish I could remember what that dealt with. Mansfield was here several times. It was very difficult to get any enthusiasm, or any sort of audience for him. His capacity to put people to sleep was unbelievable.

Chall: And Chester Bowles? He had made a speech and on this one it said on the margin, "This one is excellent."

Gatov: I wonder who sent those. Chester Bowles was one of my particular pet friends. He did a tremendous amount of spade work for Jack Kennedy, long before most other people were at it. He had a big constituency, and he came out here a lot. He was very popular here. He had children

Gatov: who lived here and so he turned up quite frequently. He was one of those who was always available to go to some odd spot and make a speech for a congressional candidate or a state senate candidate or whatever.

Chall: I see...not expecting honorariums?

Gatov: No, no. We didn't pay any honorariums in those days. Really my chief work was acting as a speakers' bureau, I think, that's what it boils down to, and trying to arrange schedules so that, for instance, the plane fare from Washington, here, could be borne by four congressional districts, by four campaigns within those districts, so that nobody would get hurt too much. Sending out the bills, and collecting the money, and that kind of thing.

Chall: I assume from what you said earlier, that you got onto the executive committee of the national committee. When did that occur and what did it mean to you, and require of you?

Gatov: I got on the executive committee rather quickly, about 1958, as I recall. There were eight members--a man and a woman representing the East, West, North and South.

It met prior to the fall committee, and worked out the agenda, lobbied the committee on important matters, and, in effect, tried to get concurrence from all the others for whatever we had previously decided we wanted. Of course the chairman and vice-chairman were in charge of it. We had very interesting, often heated discussions with the southern representatives especially.

Managing the Senate Campaign for Clair Engle, 1958

Chall: Well, we might get into the subject of the 1958 campaign, because I know that you were busy with that. What was your principal role in that campaign?

Gatov: Manager for the north for Clair Engle. I think I told you that we exposed Clair during the Stevenson campaign. Then there was a meeting at the Mark Hopkins where a number of congressmen (particularly Jimmy Roosevelt, I recall), who had toyed with the idea of running for the Senate all met, and the purpose of the meeting was to discuss who would run for the United States Senate. Against them it looked like Knowland, who was the incumbent, at that time. This was before Knowland's unexpected musical-chairs activity, and nobody seemed to want to go,

Gatov: except Clair. So he, in his own country vernacular, said, "Well, I think we ought to paint our tails white and run with the antelopes around the track a few times and see which one of us survives." They all understood what that meant. And Clair was the only one who took off. So he really had, effectively, from the people most likely to be competitors, no competition--after that--except for Alan Cranston, briefly.

Chall: Well now, let's see, I had a note somewhere that in the late fall of 1957, Los Angeles County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn threw his hat in the ring. That was about two months prior to the January CDC convention and then apparently he dropped out. He wasn't considered a serious candidate.

Gatov: I gave him my office to use--not because I liked him but it seemed that we should be hospitable to somebody who was considering a candidacy, and so he just used my desk, and my phone, and facilities--and telephoned all over northern California and found as we expected that nobody had ever heard of him; so six weeks later he went back to southern California and we never saw him again.

Chall: Now, what about Peter Odegard, who announced his intention also, in about, maybe, November. Apparently he appeared before delegate caucuses in about half the state's thirty congressional districts. And he might have won in Fresno, according to one author, if he'd entered the race in October instead of December. Do you remember Peter Odegard?

Gatov: Oh, indeed I do.

Chall: What he was doing then? And what made him decide to run? I know he had tried it a few times before--but at this point?

Gatov: He had tried it a few times before and he hadn't given up. I don't think he understood, or believed, the amount of support that we had been able to generate for Clair.

Chall: I see.

Gatov: None of this was publicized. In other words, it was not something the press had picked up or had any interest in. Pat Brown was very influential in this because he was going to run for governor and he preferred to run with Clair rather than anybody else. Gradually, we were able to let this be known in various ways. So we were picking up delegate support [CDC] all the time. In other words: You want Pat; Pat wants Clair--he feels he would be the strongest person to run with. He also trusted Clair, trusted his political judgment.

- Gatov: I think Pat had a few reservations about Peter and some of the others because they had no track record. To go from the campus to the Senate, I think made Pat a little uneasy, as it did some of the rest of us. Not that Peter wasn't a very fine person, but this was too high a level to start from. Clair presumably had more experience, understood the issues, would be a help to Pat, and not someone for whom he would have to apologize--who would be making "boobos."
- Chall: And in the case of Odegard, who went out apparently seeking his own delegates, what would the committee have been doing in northern California, just waiting to see what he...
- Gatov: No, no, we weren't waiting! We went out and were cultivating the harvest, busily. We knew, for instance, that there would be big delegations in the second district, which is Clair's district, and we did everything we could to assist those clubs, starting several years earlier, generating clubs, encouraging their formation, because there were certain rules--they had to be in existence for a certain period of time, had to have so many members, all this. Well, by the time we got down there to the convention the second district delegation was whopping--it was tremendous--but it passed through all the credentials; everything went according to the book. We had been working on clubs in many, many areas.
- Chall: And they were aware of your interest in Clair Engle?
- Gatov: Mine, and northern California's structure--such as it was.
- Chall: In Clair Engle?
- Gatov: ...very, very plain. We'd had to go around the course too. It was embarrassing at times. It really was. That was an education to me. That anyone could be in Congress for fourteen years and have as little presence as Clair had before people who were not the kind that he had a lot of in the second district. In other words, people in San Francisco gave cocktail parties for him to raise money, and that sort of thing, and it really took quite a bit of doing to get Clair over his shyness, his feeling of ill ease with people who had wall-to-wall carpeting in their homes.
- Chall: He was a country man?
- Gatov: He was a country man. I would have thought after fourteen years in Washington he was used to anything--but he wasn't!
- Chall: Was there much labor opposition to Clair Engle? Was that what Odegard could have traded on, if he could get anywhere? I noticed a letterhead during the campaign from some organization called San Francisco Democrats;

Chall: they were opposing Engle and urging votes for Knight. One letter was signed by Cyril Magnin, and Jack Goldberger. Engle had at one time apparently supported Section 146 of the Taft-Hartley Act and that bothered the labor leaders. Was this a problem?

Gatov: Well, Cranston had been stirring up the weeds. Maybe there is nothing in my material that indicates that, but during that summer of '57 he had been getting endorsements from, I think, an electrical workers' union and a couple of others in different parts of the state. Finally, I believe it was Pat who was able to prevail on Alan to withdraw and go for comptroller instead. The last thing we wanted was a real primary fight, we were feeling too fragile for that. [Laughter]

Chall: At one point in the campaign a Harris poll showed that only 3.7 percent of Californians interviewed knew Engle and 23 percent thought he was a woman.

Gatov: Yes. [Laughter] That was a cross he'd borne, I guess, all of his adult life, even though it was spelled C-L-A-I-R. That was all countered in the course of the campaign. True, the public didn't know him. The contributors did know him because we took care of that in the Stevenson campaign.

Very early on he went down to Los Angeles, which always terrified him, and he came back very discouraged because nobody knew him. So we finally scraped up the money for a poll down there. By this time Goodwin Knight was the obvious opponent, to skip over briefly what happened. The salient question in the poll was: Do you know Engle? Well, something miniscule--I think it was under 20 percent--knew Engle by this time, and the campaign was well under way--it was February. And: Do you know Knight? Yes, 80 percent knew Knight. The next question was: In a race between Knight and Engle who would you vote for? This broke out fifty-fifty. So Clair felt vastly encouraged because obviously to know Knight was not necessarily to love him and he was going to be the beneficiary of the anti-Knight vote. So his whole approach to what he was doing then changed. It was remarkable how much confidence he gained from that one thing.

Chall: I see. He was still allowed to crossfile in this election? Did he?

Gatov: Yes. All the candidates did. And then we did certain other things. Clair was a short man, but a very sturdy man, so we had some billboards done that just showed him from about the chest up and his shoulders were massive in the picture. [Laughter] It was a beautiful board; it was uncluttered and it didn't use the name Clair--"Engle for U.S. Senate."

Chall: I know the Knight people complained of the size of billboards.

Gatov: Yes, I'm sure they did.

Chall: The billboards said something like "Men grow large in Northern California."

Gatov: I don't recall that, but often Clair said, "Where I come from they measure men from the neck up." He was a wonderfully salty human being.

Chall: Well, before I go into the Engle campaign as such, what about the campaign early on, before the primary, when State Senator Robert McCarthy decided to run against Stanley Mosk for attorney general without even asking to be endorsed by the CDC?

Gatov: Yes, that was a very interesting one. McCarthy was not a particularly attractive candidate, but he was very well known in San Francisco. He came from a highly political Democratic family. He was also a good Catholic, and I think that may have been partly responsible for his feeling that CDC was too far out for him, because it was nosing around the China issue and other such liberal things.

Anyhow, in order to be taken seriously at that time, you had to be able to get around the state and speak to audiences in order to get press. When he said he would have nothing to do with the council and didn't want its endorsement, this automatically closed the doors of the local Democratic structures, so that he couldn't go to--Stockton--and get an audience. As you know service clubs are very leery about having people, once they're candidates or say they're running for something, use them as a platform. So the poor man couldn't get two people together to listen to him talk about what he had on his mind. CDC was that strong in those days.

Chall: That's interesting. Well, I guess the CDC is given a great deal of credit for the fact that the Democrats won, so handsomely, in 1958.

Gatov: I think so. I remember Newsweek saying that the volunteer effort here was worth at least a quarter of a million dollars--in today's dollars it would be a lot more than that--because people did campaign work for nothing.

Chall: And they were unified, except for a little rustling around the candidacies of Senator and the attorney general, which didn't last too long.

Gatov: It didn't last very long. I remember first meeting Stanley Mosk. I was down in San Diego for something and heard him speak. He was then superior court judge. I was much impressed. Roger and Alice Kent, in those days, liked to give political lunches at their home so

- Gatov: I suggested that the next time he was up in the north he let us know and we'd put on a lunch for him. So we did, at the Kent's, invited a lot of people from the north to meet him, and they were impressed. He was encouraged and it sort of got going from there.
- Chall: The candidates who were running from southern California were generally picked and pushed by southern California, even though they were statewide. Your primary interest then would have been Clair Engle and maybe Alan Cranston.
- Gatov: Yes, but I was also northern chairman for Mosk's campaign, which was being run by a very close friend, Nancy Strawbridge, now Jewel.
- Chall: But a campaign of that kind, three statewide candidates, could they be run in one way?
- Gatov: One way?
- Chall: I mean, can it be run out of one office or one system?
- Gatov: The Brown campaign was in a separate building altogether, a different address. In '58, as I recall, Engle had the third floor of a building one block up from Democratic headquarters--very handy. All the other statewide campaigns, including the Mosk one, were on the next two floors up, so that essentially all the rest of the statewide ticket was in one building, with very easy access to each other.
- Chall: Then since you were interested in both the Mosk and the Engle campaigns, did you conduct them in such a way that you had the same precinct organization in each congressional district, or did you have to set up separate ones?
- Gatov: No. My chairmanship, in that campaign, was really quite ceremonial. I'm sure it was Nancy's doing. So I would just preside at fund-raising luncheons or something like this. George Killion was actually the fund raiser and that's what Stanley needed. There were several others, mostly men. But in the Engle campaign, I was not the chairman; my husband now [Albert Gatov] was the chairman. I'd never heard of him until that campaign. I was the campaign manager, they called it; I think I got fifty dollars a week as expenses. That was much more of a full-time job. Don Bradley was the statewide manager.
- Chall: In the Engle campaign?
- Gatov: In the Engle campaign.
- Chall: Were you interested in any way in your office with ballot propositions 16, 17, and 18?

Gatov: What did they do?

Chall: Well, 16 advocated the return of parochial school property to the public tax rolls. And 17 was going to lower the sales tax from 3 percent to 2 percent. And 18 was the right-to-work issue.

Gatov: The right-to-work issue we loved. That helped all of the Democrats. This was an eye-opener to me, because Labor had always been telling us what a power they were, what great things they did. Well, they discovered that not more than a third of their membership was registered to vote. That was the first discovery. After that was the difficulty of getting them registered.

Well, I wish we could have right-to-work on the ballot every time. [Laughter] It produces great results. The other two were state issues and my candidate was running for federal office basically, and I'm sure I was not involved in them.

Chall: Was there an attempt that year by the Democratic party regulars, the old-time regulars, I guess, and maybe the men in Congress and the state legislature, to try to downgrade the influence of the CDC?

Gatov: Oh yes. It was a highly controversial organization. You see, what people didn't understand from any place else in the country was, first of all, that our elections code forbade the regular party to make pre-primary endorsements. Nobody could fathom the dreadful effect on Democrats of crossfiling. So we had these two handicaps that were really extraordinary, and the whole purpose of CDC, beyond what other people got out of it, you know, like various issues and resolutions, things like that, was to somehow get around those twin obstacles; to get out pre-primary endorsements, make them stick if you could, hopefully have them go right down to the local levels so that you had a unified party and the Democrats would know who the endorsed Democrats were. The proof of the pudding came really in the '58 election, though '56 had been very successful.

Chall: Now, let's see, I have some papers [rustling papers], all these in your handwriting. This looks like the Engle campaign--trying to keep track of the north and the south [laughter] schedule every day.

Gatov: That was the schedule? That would have been where he was going to be; we blocked out so many days north and so many days south, and the south filled in its own dates, with their own events.

Chall: But you did that? You did this daily?

Gatov: I was constantly scheduling.

Chall: You were also working out how he was going to get money?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: And apparently who it would be who might be approached to help?

Gatov: Where the money was going to come from, exactly. [Reading from paper] This is interesting, "Pacific Far East Lines, payroll. More later." And "American President Lines," the same thing. This is now illegal, and I think it was probably slightly illegal then. But what they would do--which was an enormous help to the campaign--was to hire secretaries and so forth from their payroll and then they would work for us. That's what that means, that word "payroll."

Chall: Now, were you conjuring up all these ideas of where the money might come from, or did you have a committee investigating this.

Gatov: I'm sure. Al Gatov, and Ellie Heller, and Bill Malone were the three most interested in Clair's campaign that I recall, and a man named Jimmy Rudden in San Francisco. I was probably just taking notes on what they were saying. I never felt creative in the fund-raising field at all. In the first place, I didn't know what it was, except the same names would come over and over. My role in this, as I recall, was to call Bill Malone all the time and he would say, "I haven't forgotten you"--in other words, "Shut up, until I'm ready!" [Laughter] But finally, after we believed that Clair really had a chance they began coming in with money. But compared to the Brown campaign, we were very underfinanced.

Chall: So you just had to get him around the state...?

Gatov: Well, we had to do the best we could, but Brown's was the glamor campaign and everybody knew him. He had top staff and infinitely more staff, and they didn't particularly want to cooperate with us. Fred Dutton was running that campaign, and I remember him telling me one day when I was seeing him about something, that I was making a great mistake with the Engle campaign because I was sticking much too close to the Democratic party. I remember saying, "Fred, you took everybody else! You got in there with a vacuum cleaner long before our campaign even started to go." We had no place else to go but to the Democratic party.

Chall: For funding, was he talking about?

Gatov: Well, funding, and people--you know, the local campaign chairmen and so forth, the people that we had working for Clair out in the boonies were...admittedly, they were people who were overt Democrats. Fred

Gatov: was trying to say that we were being too partisan, and I suppose we were, but that's all we had and we were very willing to take help where we could get it and that's where we got it.

Chall: Well, Engle defeated Knight by 700,000 votes, so apparently you felt that you had done well.

Gatov: Yes. He came through as a highly visible, good candidate.

Chall: He was a good campaigner?

Gatov: A good campaigner.

Chall: The CDC, then, in your campaign and in the Stanley Mosk campaign was the prime force in raising money and volunteers.

Gatov: And the clubs in providing a platform for him to make speeches to get press. You have to say something and you have to have someone to say it to. So this to me was the enormous value of the club structure. Stanley Mosk had good sources of money from the Jewish community in southern California.

Chall: In campaigning, do you, besides your work as the organization person-- have you ever gone out into the community and done precinct work.

Gatov: Oh yes. I did that quite a lot. And it's fascinating. I think I mentioned Dollars for Democrats program. That was one of the ways that we sort of initiated people into precinct work, because it was a nice, plausible way of getting acquainted. We tried to get people to keep the same precinct; it didn't work very well, but that was the idea. An amazing number of people were willing to respond, because they were asked. As I think I said earlier, it's the Democrats who need this more than Republicans. Unless at least one campaign in each election is doing this, we get hurt.

Chall: This is the way you keep your people--

Gatov: It really is.

Chall: --your leaders, and your workers.

Gatov: I used to take my son with me. [Laughter] He didn't enjoy it particularly, but I thought it would be good for him, to see different kinds of people. My particular precinct usually was one in Fairfax, which was one of pretty modest circumstances, and to me fascinating.

Chall: And did you campaign in precincts on other matters, like issues?

Gatov: No.

Chall: Candidates?

Gatov: I tried not to mix up too many different things at once. Usually we had slates, by the time you got around to the general election. And of course, the council, or the local club group, would have a slate for the primary, of the endorsed candidates. I'd get those out, but usually we did those by mail. We didn't have enough people to do the precinct passing-out. The Republicans were always giving us a bad time, saying we were self-appointed leaders, but we really weren't. We didn't pay any attention. And the voters responded. This was the final act of the endorsing process.

Chall: What else did you do in the campaign that you could tell me about that we haven't covered? People and issues, in '58?

Gatov: Well, I can't really think of anything. I remember being on the telephone just constantly.

Chall: Did you have a shoulder hook?

Gatov: Yes, I had a shoulder hook. I'd get a sore ear. [Laughter] What I remember most is a feeling of exhilaration, a feeling that things were moving. You get that sense in a campaign. You generally know whether you are winning or losing. Some strange things occurred. I remember a man in the attorney general's office, in Pat Brown's office--I'm sure he didn't discuss this with Pat--telling me that he could get a psychiatrist who had worked with the first Mrs. Goodwin Knight to testify that the governor had in effect induced her to commit suicide by leaving some sleeping pills--handy to her, and she'd been very drunk the night before she died, and he was willing to talk.

I took this up with the campaign chairman, Mr. Gatov, who came over and talked to me about it and he said, "Absolutely no! Don't you dare touch it." So we didn't. Things like this do occur, and I suppose some people use them. But he felt, one, it was wrong, and, two, it wouldn't work. But you just knew that Clair was going to win--all the Democrats were going to win.

Chall: And they really did.

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Except for the secretary of state. Mr. Jordan was...

Gatov: He was a fixture. I remember the Chronicle withdrawing its endorsement of Knowland, because the Fair Campaign Practices Committee (of which I'm now--and have been for years a board member, but was not at that time)... They sent out telegrams about something or other they thought was scurrilous activity on Knowland's part and so convinced the Chronicle that for the next two weeks the Chronicle ran a box on page one, saying that they had withdrawn their support of Knowland. Nothing could have been better. It was much better than an endorsement.

Chall: Yes. They didn't endorse Brown, did they?

Gatov: Oh no. They just withdrew their endorsement of Knowland.

Chall: I understand a number of the major papers in the state did just that.

Gatov: This was upon receipt of the telegrams, and then evidence later, of what the Knowland campaign had been doing. That was a great help.

Chall: In your campaign office were things in a state of chaos most of the time? Or could you pretty well keep order?

Gatov: I have never seen a successful campaign headquarters that was not in a state of chaos. [Laughter] The thing that makes it work--the thing that made that one work, was Cyr Cupertini, for instance, who is now in Mayor Moscone's office, who was our office manager. She's a woman with a card-file memory and unceasing good humor. The more you can keep the fights--rivalries--among staff to a minimum, the more work you get done. She was superb at that, and so was Don Bradley. There was a feeling of good humor. I don't recall any particular problems among those of us who worked on it.

Chall: What about just getting exhausted, tired. How do you get through a campaign like this when you're really in charge of it?

Gatov: Once you get over the feeling that nothing's happening out there you begin to get a feeling of exhilaration and that really is something of what keeps candidates going, beyond the point where they ought to be functioning. It's a self-generating kind of energy.

Chall: You must have had to spend untold hours in headquarters, or could you do some of the work at home, too?

Gatov: I could do a lot of it at home, a lot of telephoning at home, and I was always able to keep a time schedule that didn't conflict--though at this time I was getting a divorce.

Chall: That didn't help.

Gatov: No, but the campaign helped me, in that sense; it gave me other things to think about. I had somebody living at the house and she would take over for me if I wasn't back on time. Otherwise it meant that my son was there essentially alone after school. We had had a foster son for several years, four years, after my daughter was married, but he had graduated from high school and gone away. That was for the purpose really of providing some companionship for my boy. The campaign staff was good to me; they didn't ask me to do things I couldn't do within my own time schedule.

Chall: In the end, it must be pretty wearing.

Gatov: I remember buying myself a bright red velvet raincoat that election day, when I was waiting for the vote to be counted.

[end Tape 7, side 2; begin Tape 8, side 1]

Senator Engle and the China Policy
(Interview 8, February 25, 1976)

Chall: When I was going through more of your papers [during the past couple of weeks] I came across a folder marked "Senator Engle/Pacific." When I asked you a question last time about why I found an article, seemingly out of absolutely nowhere, about China [in your files] I didn't know what it all meant.

The first letter in the Senator Engle/Pacific file is dated March 31, 1959. You were writing to Senator Engle, and you told him that Roger [Kent] had told you that he [Engle] had decided to make the Pacific basin his area of specialization. What was Kent's influence on this? Was he really telling you that Clair Engle had made this decision; or did Kent have something to do with the decision having been made at all?

Gatov: I don't think Roger had anything to do with the decision having been made, but he was much more of a letter-writer than I was, and he was quite in the habit of sending letters to people and asking questions or making comments about something he had heard or read in the paper. I think, actually, that the decision of Senator Engle was arrived at after talking to a number of businessmen in San Francisco and the Bay Area generally, particularly the shipping people, who had been very supportive of his candidacy. They felt that the time to start to create the climate of public opinion that would accept the recognition of China was while Eisenhower was still president, hoping that if a Democrat came in in 1960, this dream might be accomplished.

Gatov: The idea was to try to establish San Francisco as the port which would attract most of the Pacific trade, which, of course, had dried up to absolutely nothing. The objective, as I recall, was to get a head start on Seattle and Los Angeles. In other words, to recreate San Francisco as the port into which the Oriental trade came. It pleased a number of us very much.

Clair got a lot of publicity about it, some adverse; but he put it entirely on an economic basis. I don't think he was interested in the politics of China, but felt we needed the trade.

Chall: The adverse criticism--did that come from people who didn't want any kind of trade with the Chinese Communists?

Gatov: Yes, it came basically from people who felt that we should never have anything to do with any Communist country. In those days, there was a lot of that.

Chall: I see. You set up a committee, or let's say, a committee was set up. As you said, it would be informal, but they were people deeply committed. I have the names of these people [from the file], and I'd like you to tell me about them. [Scans paper] Jack Abbott. We've talked about Jack Abbott, but why would he be on this very small, informal kitchen cabinet committee?

Gatov: Well, Jack--first of all, his personality was absolutely delightful, and he contributed a great deal to any group that he was a part of, and the smaller the better. He had a marvelous Irish wit, and when you got to know him, you really just loved him.

Jack was one of the people who had worked to get Clair into position to run for the Senate in the first place, and Jack had been a very integral part of the Heller family activities, politically and otherwise. That is, Ed Heller, Ellie Heller, and after Ed's death, Alf and Clarence. Before Jack died, just a little while ago, he was the executive director of California Tomorrow, which is Alf Heller's personal philanthropy.

At that time, however, Jack spent a great deal of his time raising political money for candidates in whom the Hellers were interested. He was very, very successful at it. There was a group which included not only the Hellers, but Pat Brown and Bill Roth, and these were close friends of the Hellers, either personally or politically, who were able to make things happen because of their usually long-range planning. You know, they weren't looking ahead six months. They were looking ahead two and a half years, which is one of the reasons that Kennedy, for instance, was invited out here so fast.

April 20, 1959

Dear Clair,

Thank you so much for your informative reply to my inquiry about you taking a special interest in the Pacific community.

I'm delighted at the news, and so were the others to whom I reported it. In fact, we were all so pleased that we decided to let no time go by in getting together to see in what way we might be of some help.

As a result, you now have an informal but deeply interested committee for this purpose, composed of Jack Abbott, Al Gatov, Ellie Heller, Joe Houghteling, Helen Milbank, Jim Thacher and myself. All but Ellie met at my house for dinner the other night means by which we might be of some assistance. What we came up with is in the attached memo.

As you probably know, Helen is going to Washington very soon and will call you office for an appointment. Bob Blum, head of the Asia Foundation here, will also be in Washington soon, I believe around the middle of May. He too, would like to talk with you.

We were of one mind that California and the whole nation is very fortunate in having a man of your capacities and energy to whom it can look, as time goes on, for information and leadership on matters pertaining to the complexities of our many relationships with Pacific countries.

We want to serve you in any way we can, and would appreciate your reaction to our initial ideas.

With warm good wishes always,

Sincerely,

*From Elizabeth Smith
to Senator Engle*

THE SACRAMENTO BEE, EDITORIAL PAGE

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 1959

Clair Engle Strikes Keen Blow At United States China Policy

Any criticism, even constructive, of this nation's Red China policy has been treated much as one might approach a carload of nitroglycerin jolting over the Burma Road.

It is to the singular credit of United States Senator Clair Engle of California that in a senate floor speech he has brought our China policy out of the realm of fantasy and untouchability into that of rationality.

In what may be the first frank official challenge to the Eisenhower administration's Red China policy in more than six years, Engle boldly stepped over that nightmare threshold where any advocacy of a possible change in such policy virtually has been equated with treason.

Papier mache illusions have controlled the state department's Red China policy—the illusion Red China was on the verge of collapse, that, as President Dwight D. Eisenhower has maintained, any forthright dealing with Red China would cause the rest of Asia to tumble into the Communist camp like “falling dominoes”, that Chiang Kai-Shek might some day return to the mainland from Formosa, that any lifting of the present news blackout between Peiping and Washington would give Red China such a buildup that millions of Asiatics would turn to Communism, that China was ever ours to lose and that

son's policies turned mainland China over to Communism.

Such illusions are a backwash of the late Senator Joseph R. McCarthy's terror that paralyzed the nation and the state department. They have also been cultivated by that loose amalgam of groups called the China lobby. Some members of this lobby are sincere in trying to get Chiang's forces back to the mainland. Some are wealthy Chinese who want to get back to resume their lush pickings at the expense of the people.

Engle, while supporting all our defenses in Asia, called for an end to the news blackout, for making it clear the United States would support no military adventure from Formosa against Red China, that at some stage in our return to reality, we negotiate with Peiping at a level higher than the present ambassadorial talks in Warsaw and that we put trade with Red China on the same basis as that with the Soviet Union.

Even the late former Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, while indignations were high against Red China because of the Korean War, wrote in his book, *War Or Peace*, “all nations should be members of the United Nations” without appraising whether they were good or bad. Engle merits great credit for his pioneering for a return to rationality in discussing the nation's Red China policy.

June 17, 1959

Memo to the China Cabinet. Ellie, Helen, Jim, Al, Jack and Joe.

The enclosed editorial about his China Policy speech pleased Clair very much indeed, as did Joe's in the Sunnyvale Standard, and the one in the Chronicle.

He is also happy that the Commonwealth Club has invited him to address the membership on some open date in the fall after he gets back from his trip to the Far East.

I understand that Senator Byrd took him on, in a speech almost as long as his, on a point by point basis, without mentioning his name. He has not expressed himself to me on this.

Clair will have 3000 reprints of the speech within a few days. We have sent him a list of 75 names, suggesting he send them the speech with a personal covering letter, which he will do. Most of that list are names of people engaged in foreign trade, shipping, international banking, and the chairmen and executive directors of a number of commissions, associations and Chambers of Commerce. With that many to distribute, I think he would appreciate getting additional names from any of you who might like to send them to him.

"I'm very grateful to all of you who've been good enough to take an interest in my entry into the complex field of our China Policy", was in a letter I received today. I guess we're batting 1000 so far.

Libby

Gatov: I think I mentioned that meeting that night. The Kennedy meeting was held in Ellie's suite. [Laughs] She was a mover, and is a mover, and many of us were philosophically in tune. I can't recall--I truly cannot recall being on the opposite side from her in any major campaign. I may have backed some initial presidential situations, such as in '72, for instance, when I was supporting John Lindsay, and she wasn't interested in him. Usually we wound up on the same side.

This would account for Jack Abbott. He was a person who could be an executive director of almost anything.

Chall: I see. How did he make a living?

Gatov: I think he was on the Heller's payroll, to the best of my knowledge.

Chall: In one or other of their--either Clarence or Alfred's?

Gatov: Yes, they had many activities, the family. I'm practically certain this was true.

Chall: Now, Al Gatov, who became your husband.

Gatov: He was an old friend of Clair's, apparently. I didn't know that until that campaign.

Chall: Yes, I wondered why he had been his campaign chairman, which you said he was.

Gatov: I'd never even heard of him until Don Bradley, who was the campaign manager, told me that when I started to function as the northern California manager, as I was described--he said that Clair wanted Al Gatov. He was in the shipping business, and was an old supporter of Jack Shelley's. That's apparently where he first got into politics, and had been raising money for Jack.

Somewhere or other, Clair knew him very well, or maybe Jack Abbott had something to do with it. I don't know, really, how he happened to be chosen for this, but I remember very well the first time I met him, which was at a luncheon at the Fairmont. Let's see--Don Bradley, and somebody else, and Al and myself.

Chall: Just to get started on the campaign?

Gatov: This was about the middle of April. The campaign was well under way. And he said he wouldn't leave the Shelley campaign until he'd raised all the money for that, that he felt he should, and he didn't think he

Gatov: wanted to do the two together. So we kept functioning without a chairman, which was very irritating to me. [Laughs] I told him that I thought he ought to drop what he was doing! I didn't know him very well then.

I just kept looking at him, and wondering where he came from, really, because I knew most of the people who were active in party politics, but he had not been--and isn't today--the kind of person that likes to go to meetings and gatherings and so forth. He had done his political work from his office and had been functioning in that way.

But when he got into the campaign, he really got in.

Chall: So he was a natural, I guess, on the committee that was committed to shipping?

Gatov: Yes, he was another one of the people that thought this was 'way overdue, and let's get started. Clair, who had been chairman of the House Interior Committee before he went to the Senate, was anxious to find a role for himself that no other senator happened to have, so this is what they picked.

Chall: Ellie Heller, of course--why would she have been interested in the Pacific area?

Gatov: Because she was interested in Clair! [Laughs] I think this was one of the strongest motivations that we all had. We never dreamed, of course, that he was going to die so soon. He was a young, very vigorous man, and a delightful human being. We were very interested, too, as he was, in seeing that he carve out a special niche and become a resource to the country, as well as to California, on a particular issue. Since Interior was pretty well taken up by previously-elected senators, this was something that he could take for himself, and become sort of the opposite number to Knowland, really.

Chall: Joe Houghteling--?

Gatov: Houghteling. [Pronounces and spells it] He's the grandson of Joseph Cannon, who was once Speaker of the House. His name is Joseph Cannon Houghteling, he just had his fiftieth birthday last year, I think. He was the publisher of the Sunnyvale Herald, I think that was the name of the paper.

Chall: [Laughter] So that's the reason why there was an editorial about Senator Engle's speech on China. It didn't make any sense to me; I wondered why was it in the Sunnyvale Herald, of all papers?

Gatov: Well, Joe lives in Atherton, still. His wife Franny, who was then alive, is now dead. She was also a very good friend of the Hellers and Jack Abbott. We were all good friends. We liked each other besides the politicking part, and really enjoyed it.

Chall: But he was there because he was interested--what was his business?

Gatov: He sold his newspapers. He had several papers. The Sunnyvale Herald was the one that he personally seemed to work at.

Chall: That was no reason for him to be interested in the Pacific Basin as such?

Gatov: No. He had the same political interests that we all did.

Chall: Clair Engle. Well, now, Helen Milbank?

Gatov: She was a classmate of mine in college?

Chall: Which college?

Gatov: Smith, and had come out here after she married Robbins Milbank. She'd had a very interesting history as a foreign correspondent, and working in the State Department, and some other fascinating things. She turned up in San Francisco, and was interested in politics, so we got her involved in Clair's campaign. She's a dynamo kind of person, and she promptly became part of the group who were ongoing, really, after the election.

Chall: Jim Thacher?

Gatov: Jim Thacher. He's the same family as the Thacher School in southern California, Santa Barbara. He is an attorney in San Francisco, lives on Washington Street, and has been active in Democratic politics for quite a long time--I would say a good twenty-five years. He was part of that campaign.

I think I mentioned earlier that Fred Dutton was very critical of us, because we had so many identified Democrats in the Engle campaign, which he thought was a mistake, a political error, because the Brown campaign was attracting people who were known for their good works, or their surgical brilliance, or academic achievements, or their business prominence.

They took them all. They had them all, and they got organized sooner. Pat, of course, was well known. So we, perforce, had to fall back on the people who were accustomed to political activity and involvement, and never mind if they were outstanding in some other field.

Gatov: So all these people that you've named so far have had quite a history of involvement with Democratic politics.

Chall: You certainly did carry on a strong campaign, giving him [Engle] ideas, and drafting letters that he could use to send out with his speech when he made it, and opening up the possibility of his giving a major talk at the Commonwealth Club--all of that. You really were functioning in a way that was strong.

Gatov: We felt that this was the appropriate thing to do. We'd worked hard to elect him, and we wanted to make darned sure that he was reelected, and that he became a well-known figure. So this was the kind of thing that we felt we could do. And we urged him to accept the invitations. He was basically socially a shy person, and Helen Milbank, for instance, used to arrange cocktail receptions for him, for fund raising. She would assure him that the carpeting on the floor would be no more than two inches thick. [Laughs]

He was a person from the country, and of rather simple background. He adapted. [Laughs] He became quite accomplished socially, and this is part of the process, really, in the development of the candidate.

Chall: Helen Milbank went to Washington to see Engle. Apparently, she was on her way to Paris and London with the Chase Manhattan Bank. How was she connected?

Gatov: I don't happen to recall.

Chall: Her letter to you must have been quite lengthy, because your memo to the committee was; there were a few interesting matters in it. Well, first, there were problems organizing his office. I guess he'd only been in there about what, a few months, really, and he was getting a tremendous amount of mail, which was surprising to everybody. He had an assistant, whose name was Tom Bendorf, who seemed to be having problems. Is there anything of importance in that?

Gatov: Well, this is kind of an interesting story. I knew Tom Bendorf, because he had been with the Coro Foundation as an intern, either the year I was, or the year following, when I was on the staff. Tom had been a city manager, I believe, in Santa Maria, when Clair went down to the CDC convention, because the endorsement was tremendously important to him. We needed somebody to simply stay with him, and see that he was in the right place at the right time, follow his schedule, take charge of the hospitality room and drinks--sort of take care of him.

Bendorf [laughs] has a very charming manner, a very low-key personality, and a very melodious voice. Clair became very attached to him, in the course of this brief exposure at the CDC convention.

Gatov: After it was over, Tom went back to Santa Maria, and Clair kept on campaigning. But after he was elected, he asked Tom to come back to Washington with him, and eventually he became his administrative assistant, and then went on to other things later on.

Chall: Did he stay with Engle?

Gatov: Not all the time. I mean, he had left him before Clair died.

Chall: Mrs. Milbank thought that Pat Brown and Engle's relationships were not good. Yet in your Kennedy interview, you indicate that they got along quite well, considering that they were very different kinds of people.* Of course, two years had passed, approximately, so perhaps they had patched up their differences. One of the differences had to do with Paul Ziffren, whom we will discuss.

Gatov: I know we're going to discuss it, and I wish I could remember more about it. I hope you've found some things that will extend my recollection.

Chall: That is about all we'll discuss about Engle and his interest in the China trade. Much more can be found in The Bancroft Library. Now I understand a little bit about the Sunnyvale papers.

Gatov: [Laughs] Wonderful.

*An oral history interview with Elizabeth Rudel Gatov, by Dennis J. O'Brien, for the John F. Kennedy Library, June 25, 1969. A copy has been deposited in The Bancroft Library.

VI DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEEWOMAN FOR CALIFORNIA, 1960

The California Delegation, 1960

Chall: Now let's get into the 1960 primary campaign, and this all-important selection of the delegates. Ten people were appointed to select the delegates--one hundred and sixty delegates, I think it was, and eighty alternates. And of course, you were one of the women among the ten, because you were national committeewoman.

The other one was Virginia Foran, who was chairman of the women's division. Tell me who Virginia Foran was.

Gatov: Virginia Foran was a woman who, with her husband, ranched in Porterville, down in the valley. She was a remarkable person with a tremendous dedication to the Democratic party, and an enormous capacity for work, and a delightful personality, who died fairly soon after the 1960 election. Quite suddenly, and much too young. She was a great person.

Chall: Well, this committee was set up to choose delegates who would be presumably loyal to Pat Brown as their favorite son, but the main reason, of course, was to keep the competing primary candidates out of California. That, of course, is all down in the history books.

I'm interested in how you managed to select a hundred and eighty people--I'd better get that straight. One hundred and sixty, and eighty alternates, from approximately three hundred, who were chosen at the caucuses, none of whom were legislators, congressman, or elected officials.

How did you do that? You, I know, promised the caucuses that they should select six to ten people who would be willing to be delegates to the convention, and you promised them that you would select at least two out of that ten, and most of the time, I guess, you did. I think it was in Carmel some place, that the selection process took place.

Gatov: It was at the Highlands Inn, and we met in the wedding chapel there. The thing that made it very difficult to live up to that promise was not the quality of people who come out of the caucuses, but that by the time we got to February, we knew that Kennedy was going to be a candidate. The national polls were showing him very far ahead, and Pat Brown, we knew, was having difficulties with Kennedy, who wanted to come in to the California primary. We wanted to build up solid support for Brown.

Now, while some of us were interested in Kennedy--myself among them--there were many others who were much more interested in Pat Brown than they were in anything else. I believe Jack Shelley was one of the people who were part of that selection group representing Congressman Harry Sheppard.

Chall: Interested in Pat Brown?

Gatov: Yes. We weren't interested in Pat Brown as president. I don't think any of us took that newspaper speculation seriously at all, but simply saw the favorite son device as a way to bring the party together under one person's leadership, the governor's. We wanted the delegates to have a feeling of, frankly, obligation for the governor and gratitude to him for having been appointed.

They weren't, usually. You're quite right. It turned out to be a total fiasco, eventually. We couldn't see that far ahead. Very early on, a decision was made that every elected official--of course, a Democrat--was going to be invited onto the delegation in some capacity.

There were a hundred of them, I believe, and a tremendous number chose to accept. If they didn't accept, we said, "Well, of these people in your district, what would you think of So-and-So replacing you on the delegation?"

Chall: So they had some choice there.

Gatov: So they had some choices, yes.

Chall: Is this the place to tell the stories about legislators and the 1960 convention?

[end Tape 8, side 1; begin Tape 8, side 2]

Gatov: Most of the elected officials had never been to a national convention before, and most of them accepted very quickly. During the convention, most of them bitterly regretted it. The reason was that the wave of enthusiasm for Adlai Stevenson, which was non-existent in any other state,

Gatov: raced like a fever through this one. It was nostalgia probably. In any case, as the press reports began to come out about the rising Kennedy strength, the local activists began to let their delegates know that they expected them to vote for Stevenson. Bales of telegram poured into the hotel, warning delegates what to expect if they didn't support him. In the vein of "if you don't vote for Stevenson, don't bother coming back." Many of them were very nasty.

It didn't trouble those of us who weren't holding office especially, but it was obviously painful for those who did.

The wires came in such volume the office staff just couldn't handle them, and in the end many were just stuffed into cartons in the delegation headquarters and never delivered at all. Anyway, most of the officeholders left that convention vowing never to get themselves into such a buzzsaw ever again.

Many of us had a very protective interest in Pat. He'd only been governor for two years, and really, more than any interest in any candidate was the idea to have all the branches of the party represented, and particularly to have legislators on the delegation, hoping that this would bring about some harmony in the party.

Of course, the Stevenson candidacy was not even thought of at that time, which eventually proved so disruptive. It wasn't a factor.

Chall: It wasn't a factor?

Gatov: It was not a factor in February.

Chall: Was it a factor in some of the people whom you chose?

Gatov: No, they had all pretty much once upon a time been for Adlai Stevenson anyway. He'd run twice before, you see. By 1960, the party was pretty much Stevenson adherents. Not altogether, by any means. There were some Kefauver people, but the vast majority had been supportive of Stevenson.

Chall: Your concern was, then, to be sure that as many elected public officials as wanted to go to the convention did, and secondly, that you then picked people who were active and important in the party, regardless of whether they were for Stevenson or Kennedy or someone else?

Gatov: Nobody was for Stevenson at that time.

Chall: But he did have sixty-three votes. I understand a number of the people among those ten actually voted for Stevenson at the convention.

Gatov: Yes. But at that time, it was not presumed that Stevenson was going to be a candidate.

Chall: Oh, I see what you mean.

Gatov: He had been saying that he was not a candidate. He had not entered any primaries. He was going to some lengths to exclude himself from the process. But by spring, about a month after this, the Johnson people, Johnson supporters in Washington (who by this time were realizing that Lyndon Johnson wasn't getting anywhere in the convention--he was not getting enough delegates) figured out that if they could start a nation-wide "Draft Adlai Stevenson" move to block John Kennedy at the convention, they could damage the front-runner, which Kennedy increasingly became in the spring, so that possibly on the third ballot, Kennedy would have almost faded out, and Johnson would have a chance.

The reason I'm saying this so positively is that at the time--

Chall: Now you know.

Gatov: Now I know. At the time I strongly suspected it. When we were down in Los Angeles at the convention, if you mentioned this scenario to some of the Stevenson supporters, they were really ready to put a knife in you. They thought this was the most crowning insult that you could possibly say about their hero, but it was confirmed to me a couple of years later by Mike Monroney, who was then a United States Senator from Oklahoma, who was the chairman of this operation.

They listed such people as Mrs. Meyer--what's her name, of the Washington Post.

Chall: Agnes Meyer.

Gatov: Agnes Meyer. And Eleanor Roosevelt. They tried to involve Roger Kent on a national basis. He was very much flattered. It took a lot of persuasion to prevent him from going with them, because he loved Adlai Stevenson, and he wasn't enchanted with any other candidate. This was the Johnson play, and Stevenson, and I'm sure Mrs. Meyer and Mrs. Roosevelt, never realized that this was what was happening to him.

As I say, Monroney admitted this to me in Hawaii, in a hotel that we happened to both be staying at, two or three years later. I asked if this could be the case, and he said, "Why, of course. I mean, you must have known." [Laughs] It didn't suggest itself to me right away, but what ticked me off was George Miller, Jr., then state senator from Contra Costa County, who had never liked Adlai Stevenson. He was an ardent Kefauver supporter, as you remember, whom I knew very well.

Gatov: George, for eight years, had been telling me what a lousy candidate Adlai Stevenson was. All of a sudden, we got to Los Angeles. The first meeting of the delegation, George got up and began making speeches for Adlai Stevenson--what a great American he was, and how this would be our last opportunity, probably, to support this great man, and we would start a prairie fire on the convention floor if we would stay in a supportive role for Adlai Stevenson.

When I heard George Miller suddenly discovering the virtues of Adlai Stevenson, something was wrong! The something that went on in my head was that always in Sacramento, his voting record was super, as far as liberals like myself were concerned, except where the petroleum industry had an interest. We knew this. There were a lot of refineries in his district, and he didn't balk at it. Soon the light went on. "Oil" did not want Adlai Stevenson. I mean, it never had wanted Adlai Stevenson. All of a sudden, now, why was oil interested in Adlai Stevenson?

Chall: They were not interested in Kennedy?

Gatov: They did not want Kennedy. They wanted to block Kennedy. Many people had said that they would support Kennedy on the first ballot, and then review the bidding, so that's when it became quite apparent. Stop Kennedy on the first ballot, and he probably wouldn't make it. [Laughs]

Chall: But this had nothing to do with the kinds of people who came onto the delegation?

Gatov: No, nothing.

Chall: What was in your mind when you made the selection? Those few that you had left?

Gatov: Well, the people who were, well, shall we say in quotes, "deserving"? We tried to have a balanced delegation, and I think probably it came out pretty much that way, and by balanced, we're talking about almost the same thing that the McGovern reform commission was after, which was women, minorities, labor, different age groups, contributors, party workers, senior citizens--did I mention them?

In other words, we were pretty ethnic minded. I forget--there's another word that we used last time around to define the different segments of the electorate that we wanted involved. We were looking totally towards the next campaign in November. Of course, that would happen after the convention, because really, nobody knew what was going to happen at that time, at the convention.

Gatov: It wasn't really clear during the delegate selection that Kennedy wasn't coming into our primary. There was still time for him.

Chall: There weren't as many women on that delegation as the McGovern--?

Gatov: No, and I don't think we had as many as we had in '56, because of all these legislators, and we didn't have many women legislators.

Chall: I guess there were only forty-four women--I counted them--delegates and alternates together. Twenty-four delegates and twenty alternates.

Gatov: I think I was the only woman who was supporting Kennedy. I'm not certain about it. Carmen Warschaw started out supporting Kennedy, and then she got the word from her father that she had to support Johnson. My recollection was the rest of the women, at least that I happened to know--Ann Eliaser, and Jane Morrison, and quite a number of others--were solidly backing Stevenson.

Chall: You've said, in your interview with the Kennedy Library that you did a great deal of campaigning for Kennedy, going from one delegate to the next, and finally managed to get William Matson Roth on your side--the last convert. How did you go about doing this? Who else? You were probably the only woman doing it--what other men?

Gatov: Jess Unruh was doing it in southern California and I was doing it in northern California.

Chall: I see. So you split your delegates?

Gatov: We split the state.

Chall: Split the state?

Gatov: Geographically.

Chall: And your caucus? I mean, at the convention?

Gatov: No, prior to the convention. Well prior. During the middle of May on, Larry O'Brien had come to take up residence in Los Angeles, and it was his idea that Jess and I do this. We were two people who were for Kennedy, and by this time I was quite certain that this was where Pat Brown was; he'd been making enough noises to indicate that, even though he hadn't made a public declaration of it, because for his own reasons, he didn't choose to.

Gatov: So I used to sit on the terrace in a hammock with a long extension cord on my telephone, in the pleasant sunshine. (I had a list of the delegates and all the telephone numbers.) I just dialed, and dialed, and dialed, and dialed, and dialed!

Chall: Is that right!? [Laughter]

Gatov: And I just kept working on them. Of course, I kept track of who was where, because if they weren't for Kennedy, then there were several other specifics. You'll notice that nobody said anything about Pat Brown.

Chall: He got a half vote. I always wondered who that was.

Gatov: Probably somebody who didn't want to do anything else. [Laughs] It wasn't because he was so in love with Pat.

But I would keep a record--they were for Kennedy or they were for somebody else.

Chall: Symington? Johnson, Stevenson; I guess. Bowles and Humphrey were--

Gatov: --out of contention by that time. Bowles was for Kennedy by that time, and came out to California and was very helpful. This was Chester Bowles. That was the way I worked, and every few days, if there was any significant change, or I managed to pick up somebody that was particularly pleasing, I'd call Larry O'Brien in Los Angeles and tell him. He kept score too.

Chall: And this was probably being done all over the United States?

Gatov: I'm sure it was. This was the Kennedy organization way, which has never been surpassed in my experience.

Chall: Eventually--I presume the figures I have are the first ballot, official ballot. Kennedy received sixty-seven votes, Symington sixteen, Johnson fifteen, and Stevenson sixty-three, Brown one.*

Gatov: That's right. Each of our delegates had one-half a convention vote.

*Another way some authors show these figures is: Kennedy 33 1/2, Stevenson 31 1/2, Symington 8, Johnson 7 1/2, Brown 1/2.

Chall: A study was made by--I can't remember the authors--

Gatov: Eugene Lee and John (now president of San Jose State) Bunzel. They were there. It's a very interesting record. I have a copy of that. I haven't read it in years.*

Chall: Another study made of the delegation by Edmund Constantini was a statistical study of the delegates, and of those who had been chosen by the caucuses but weren't put on the delegation either as delegates or alternates.** The author's premise is that those caucus delegates who were ultimately chosen to go on as either delegates or alternates--were more liberal than those chosen who were party leaders or legislators. But they were less radical or liberal than those who were rejected; that's the reason I ask you, on what premise were they rejected?

Gatov: I wonder what they meant by radical? I don't recall. Some of the Young Democrats?

Chall: No, they asked them where they stood on various issues which they themselves had determined either placed them as conservatives or liberal or more radical. I don't remember what all the issues were.

Gatov: That's probably true, because in those days--and I think it's still true today--we were, after all, Establishment, who were doing the picking. When you're Establishment, you're not looking for anybody who'll particularly rock the boat, especially when we had those two fledgling prizes of the governor and senator. We didn't want anything to upset the image that existed, and so if they were known to be pretty far out--and I can think of some now that we would have rejected--they would be rejected in favor of people who were less likely to behave strangely.

I'm sure they'd note the fact that preliminarily there was no consideration of where they were, as far as supporting nominees.

*John H. Bunzel and Eugene C. Lee, "The California Democratic Delegation of 1960." The Inter-University Case Program, #67, University of Alabama, 1962. This is a very thorough study of the delegation from before the date of its selection to the final convention balloting.

**Edmund Constantini, "Intraparty Attitude and Conflict: Democratic Party Leadership in California," Western Political Quarterly, Vol. 16 (December, 1963), pp. 956-972.

- Chall: That, I think, is true. They say that a charge had been made that the selection committee was biased against Stevenson and toward Kennedy, but they considered that unlikely, for the reasons generally that you've already given.
- Gatov: Charges made later, but not made at the time, because Stevenson was still busy not being a candidate and the committee to promote him had not been formed.
- Chall: Marshall Windmiller was a commentator on KPFA, and you have saved one of his broadcast transcripts. In it he complained of the fact that the delegation he felt would not make much of a fight for a platform that calls for an intelligent foreign policy.
- Gatov: Which meant recognition of China.
- Chall: No, he was concerned then, about disarmament?* He felt that the general thrust of the Kennedy campaign was for armaments. And I guess in a way that really was how Kennedy based his campaign, on the fact that there was a missile gap.
- Gatov: If you re-read his inaugural address, I was surprised at how belligerent it reads today. But I sat there in the snow and listened to it, and it didn't sound at all belligerent. [Laughs] So it must be in the context of the political environment or the era that you're in.
- Chall: Can you tell me anything about the fact that Brown released the delegates, I guess, prior to the first ballot?
- Gatov: It was practically a riot! At the same time, at the same caucus, which was the first caucus of the delegation (I mentioned George Miller speaking on behalf of Stevenson), Chet Holifield delivered a diatribe against Pat Brown. It was a dreadful thing to listen to, really, accusing him of overwhelming ambition, trying to run for the presidency.
- Chall: Really?
- Gatov: Yes, it was an appalling thing.
- Chall: Why would he do that?

*Marshall Windmiller Commentary, "Peace and the Democratic Party," Broadcast KPFA, April 5, 1960, KPFA, April 8, 1960.

Gatov: I can't recall what his motivation was. I'd probably figured it out at the time, but he naturally didn't say, demanding that the delegation be released. This is where he wound up. So Pat, by this time, had had enough. He was sick of being chewed out and ridiculed in the press and so forth, so he relieved the delegates of their obligation to him, which was only theoretical anyway. Nobody really believed that his name would be placed on nomination.

Chall: Wasn't it just a holding action to see who was coming off on the first ballot, anyway?

Gatov: Yes. I don't think that it even went that far. I think Pat would have released the delegation before the first ballot, in any case, but I think he wanted to be the one who was spokesman for it, up to that point. Usually in the past, there had been caucuses at which a sample vote was taken. I think he proposed to do it as we had done it in the past, but with one voice.

What happened this way, when it was released, was that then we had five different chieftains, all working for their own candidate, and that some of them were more chaotic at that convention than usual. Or so it seemed to come out in the press.

Chall: I'll probably talk to you about the convention itself later, I'm just going to stick with the delegates for a moment. The fact that several people wrote letters expressing disappointment with the fact that either they, or their friends, or their colleagues were picked was just par for the course, I suppose. Somebody's always disappointed.

Gatov: Well, the thing that made it valid was that there had been that commitment made to the caucuses, and unfortunately, it was not a commitment that was kept. At least, it was kept as nearly as possible with the overriding consideration of the elected officials.

Reelection as National Committeewoman

Chall: Now just before you went off the convention--not too shortly before, but after the primary--there was a selection of committeeman and committeewoman, which I guess was pretty exciting. You were picked again as national committeewoman, and did you tell me once that you had had opposition in 1960 and 1956 from Carmen Warschaw?

Gatov: Yes, and in 1964 also.

Chall: How do women manage to oppose each other in this?

Gatov: We each get a certain amount of support from delegates. In other words, along with calling for Kennedy, I, after a while, got around to making phone calls for myself.

Chall: Is that so?

Gatov: Oh, yes, asking if they would support me, and trying to get other people also to call and see if the delegates would support me for reelection. I didn't do a great deal about it, that I can recall. I was primarily in that spot, considered myself an emissary of Pat Brown. In other words, his sponsorship of me in '56--

Chall: He sponsored you?

Gatov: Well, in a way. He was attorney general. He wanted me rather than Carmen, and if he could tell her that he was committed to me, this would perhaps help him out of his spot.

Chall: And why was she prominent at that time, in terms of consideration?

Gatov: Well, she represented quite an influence in southern California, and a great deal of money. Her father was Leo Harvey, and she had a brother whose name I forget [Lawrence], and they were Harvey Aluminum, which was a company with factories in several different areas.

They were non-union, and this was one of the things that was the matter. Labor, as you know, is much stronger in northern California than it is in southern California. It certainly was in those days. So this accounted for one reason why they were willing to support me, and it made me acceptable to a number of other people who were on the delegation, who did not wish to get into a position of supporting somebody who was part of a family that had such--in labor's view--despicable labor practices. They really had quite a history of rather unpleasant labor relations.

Chall: And this was true in 1956 as well?

Gatov: Yes. Harvey Aluminum was a family-owned company.

Chall: Was she supporting Stevenson in '56, or would that have mattered?

Gatov: I don't recall. But she had to have, if she was on the Stevenson delegation.

Chall: And so at this time she was on the Brown delegation?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: It was the same problem again, the same people taking similar sides?

Gatov: Just about, yes.

Chall: Do you recall whether you won by a significant number of votes?

Gatov: As I recall, she withdrew, (I'm not certain about this) before a final vote was taken. I'm not sure. I don't recall being concerned, particularly, about the outcome.

Chall: Did people make speeches against each other, against the candidates?

Gatov: For the candidates, and I was able to get the support of, well, Pat Brown for instance. I don't recall who the other two were in 1960, but either legislators or somebody like Alan Cranston, who had been head of California Democratic Council. As I recall, I tried to have one woman and two men, and vary it on a geographical basis, representing different things. I don't really recall who they were. In any case, they would get up and address the delegates, and tell them what a splendid woman I was, and Carmen's would get up and do the same for her. Then they would take the ballot, and I won.

Chall: Was that an unpleasant experience?

Gatov: Not particularly, because if you've done your preparation properly, you know where your votes are. So you know before you get into this, pretty well, at least before the votes are counted, whether you're going to win or lose.

As far as I was concerned, had I not had the votes each time, I certainly would have withdrawn prior to the vote, so that there'd be a unanimous ballot cast for whoever the opponent was. I don't see any point in creating embarrassments for the people who had said that they were going to support you, and two days later, they're turning up supporting your opponent, which does happen.

But by keeping a pretty close check--and I had a lot of help. I mean, Roger was helping me, and Don Bradley was helping me, and Jack Abbott, and any number of people who were keeping track themselves of the people they could talk to. So if there'd been any shift, I would have been aware of it, I think.

Chall: So it becomes a real contest, and the prize is worth it.

Gatov: [Laughs] Well, if you like public service. As my husband moaned after the phone rang for the third time, "Public service is its own reward!" [Laughter] It [the phone call] was for him each time.

Chall: I really didn't know whether Helen Milbank and Mrs. Robbins Milbank were the same woman.

Gatov: They are.

Chall: There's a letter in your files from Mrs. Robbins Milbank, on July 25, 1959, which was just a few months after she'd gone off to check on Clair Engle for you all. [Reading] She's discussing appointments, and elections coming up and things of this kind. But then she says, "Lastly, in my view, the Democratic party of California should be preparing now for the election of its representatives on the national committee, and for the earliest selection of the new chairman of the party to replace Mr. Butler, who seems to me to have greatly outlived his usefulness as a party chairman."

"I would earnestly hope that we will abide by the tradition of alternating the committeeman and woman between North and South, and in 1960 see the Committeeman selected from the North and the Committee-woman from the South. This is most certainly not intended as a criticism of Elizabeth Smith, whose handling of this job during the past three years has been a masterpiece of tact, competence and hard work."

Gatov: Gracious. Who did she send the letter to?

Chall: To Governor Brown. This is a carbon that was in your file. I was interested in the letter before I knew who Mrs. Milbank was, and now, of course, I'm more interested. There are several things to discuss. One, of course, we know about Mr. Butler. Apparently, he was put out of office in 1960, and there was a great deal of criticism about it. I guess we talked about that last time.

But why this talk of tradition of the committeeman and women alternating between the north and south, when as far back as I can check, except for Helen Gahagan Douglas, all of the committeewomen seem to have come from the north.

Gatov: Helen was a relatively recent arrival in California. She is not a Californian. She's from New York, originally. What I think concerned her was the normal tradition of switching the chairmanship. In other words, as part of the rotation of offices north and south.

Chall: Yes, but that's the state committee.

Gatov: Yes, that's right. As far as I know, I don't recall ever seeing this letter before, but--

Chall: There it was.

Gatov: There it was. [Laughs] In those days, all of my files were kept in the Democratic headquarters. I had an office there with Roger Kent and several other people, Alan Cranston and so on. Mail like this probably came down from the governor's office, and Louise Ringwalt or whoever was the secretary at the time just filed it in the proper place. I just don't recall even answering it, but I suppose I did.

Chall: It's possible that what she is saying, although she didn't say it-- she might really be thinking about changing Paul Ziffren.

Gatov: This may have been it.

Chall: And perhaps she felt that if Paul Ziffren were replaced, she may already have had an inkling about who the replacement might be, or might possibly be, and therefore felt that if there was a tradition of north-south in the party structure in the state, that maybe it also had to do with the committeeman and woman. Did you say that she had only recently come into California?

Gatov: Yes, as I recall. She hadn't been here very long before the '58 election.

Chall: She might have been confused.

Gatov: She probably didn't like Paul Ziffren. I think that's probably the case.

Chall: It wasn't that she wanted Carmen Warschaw?

Gatov: I'm sure that's not the case.

Chall: When I first read the letter, I thought maybe that was in her mind.

Gatov: She was--is--a woman of great candor to begin with, and as I say, we had been friends for thirty years then, and were such close friends that we frequently had lunch together, and I'd go to their house for dinner, and so forth. I don't think that's what she was after. She would not normally be the kind of person who would approve of Carmen.

Replacing Paul Ziffren as National Committeeman

Chall: Now that we've got you back into the national committeewoman position, what was this all about with Paul Ziffren and the replacement of Paul Ziffren with Stanley Mosk?

Gatov: This was what I mentioned before we started interviewing. I have tried to think of what this was all about, and I can recall how bitter it was. I can recall that I was supporting Stanley, whom I really didn't know all that well, except that of course he was the attorney general, which to me was a drawback to him. I really didn't approve of elected officials holding these party offices.

It must have been something very, very serious, and I don't recall what it was.

Chall: This is what is interesting for several seasons. Here's an article that was in your file. San Francisco News-Call Bulletin, date June 14, 1960, by Jack McDowell.

Gatov: He was regarded by us Democrats as a very well informed political commentator.

Chall: I see. That's important--

Gatov: --and a friendly one, normally, whereas there were others in the state who were not regarded as particularly friendly. He was one of the people who used to call headquarters for information, and if you said, "Not for attribution," it was not attributed. We had a very good relationship with him.

Chall: And if a person were to come across his material, after so many years, he could think: This is fairly accurate, this man knew what he was talking about?

Gatov: He was regarded in those days as probably one of the best informed, if not the best informed, political commentator in San Francisco.

Chall: He says here that, "California's Democratic delegation--elected just a week ago today--will convene in Sacramento Saturday"--that's several days later--"to toss out Paul Ziffren as the state's Democratic national committeeman. Attorney General Stanley Mosk has been drafted--with some evidence of reluctance--as the man to succeed him.

"That's the way it's planned. But Ziffren has served notice that it won't be easy; they won't do it without a fight.

"The warrant for Ziffren's political beheading, however, has been signed and sealed by Governor Pat Brown, National Committeewoman Elizabeth Smith of Kentfield, Northern California Chairman Roger Kent of Marin and San Francisco, State Chairman William A. Munnell of Montebello and other key figures in California's Democratic hierarchy."

Gatov: He didn't say what Paul had done.

Chall: Yes, there's a little more of that.

Gatov: I think it must have stemmed out of something to do with the governor.

Chall: Apparently it did. I was first of all interested in the fact that it sounded as if several of you from the top spots in the party had made a decision and that McDowell already knew about it.

Gatov: Oh, there are no secrets in politics. [Laughs] None!

Chall: It's just one you've forgotten.

Gatov: That's exactly it. I'm not trying to keep anything back. Simply, I could recall the whole scene. I remember even making the original speech--"The California Democratic Party is a tent, not an umbrella," [Laughs] you know, such phrases. But for the life of me, I haven't been able to recall what the problem was.

Paul Ziffren has a very interesting political background, and certainly some people had been nervous about him for some time. I think you would find, if you ask, that the Hellers, for instance, as the force in the party in the north, had very little use for him. They felt that he was a devious person, and devious, I think, is probably the best word to use.

He'd been a protégé of Jake Arvey's in Chicago, and had moved to California under circumstances which at least had been mentioned in the press as rather questionable. His practice was flourishing, and he was exerting a tremendous amount of influence on the national level through Paul Butler. What this was--none of these things would have been adequate, so there must have been something particular that created apprehension, or hostility.

Chall: Maybe Pat Brown's the one to give out the information, because he's probably the person who would best remember it. So we'll just ask him when we interview him. There was concern that California congressmen wanted him out, because he was attempting to represent California Democrats in Washington.

Gatov: That could be part of it.

Chall: I think that could be part of the concern about the Democratic Advisory Committee that Paul Butler had set up, the advisory committee to study issues, because I guess the congressman didn't want issues placed before them.

Gatov: None of that seems adequate to me. They could have just opposed him themselves, without having Pat do it. It's ridiculous, because I knew Pat Brown, and knew this was going to come up, and I've been thinking about it for weeks. It's just in the deep recesses.

Chall: At the time of the 1960 campaign--I don't really want to go into this very deeply--somebody had written a proposed primary campaign plan which meant just showing the governor at his best. But what interests me is that it's well done as a campaign plan but there's nothing else to show anything about who wrote it. "To develop a plan of action for the spring campaign, a small working committee should meet right away. It probably should consist of the governor, Alan Cranston, Don Bradley, Bill Munnell, Jess Unruh, Hale Champion, Dick Tuck, and myself."

Gatov: Fred Dutton I'm sure wrote that. The mention of Dick Tuck is the clue. I'll write that on the cover. Dick Tuck was a Coro fellow too.

Chall: Isn't he credited with starting dirty tricks?

Gatov: Well they do not belong in the same category. [Laughs] He did some fairly serious things but nothing to compare with what the Nixon group thought up.

Background on Kennedy Nomination Strategy

Chall: Now I'd like to talk about some of the background to the convention, in which you were very active. Before we get into the whole matter of tickets--[laughs] just incredible!--I'd like to ask you about the background behind the campaign of John Kennedy. You mentioned in your Kennedy interview that you had dinner at Harriman's [Averell] home, that there was always something going on when you went to the national committee meetings that would indicate that Kennedy forces were working behind the scenes to interest all the, I guess, national committeepeople, or whomever they felt would be influential.

Gatov: Yes, it was in his home in New York.

Chall: What kind of dinner was that?

Gatov: Elegant, delightful. There were many, many people working on the Kennedy campaign, and most of us out here in California didn't really find out who they were until a lot of time had passed. I was--at least I explained several interviews back--in the unusual position of going back East to Washington at least frequently in those days, because of the fact that the convention was going to be held in Los Angeles. I was on the arrangements committee.

Gatov: The Kennedy campaign was absolutely brilliant, from our view, from start to finish. They overlooked no opportunity to try to be friendly, and to try to involve anybody with any political role anyplace in the country they could find them. At that dinner at Harriman's that was referred to, I recall asking Averell Harriman about what proportion of the New York delegation he thought would go to Kennedy.

By this time, it was apparent--I think this was in the middle of May--that he had Massachusetts, he had Connecticut. Connecticut Governor Abraham Ribicoff at that time was very much for him, as was John Bailey, who was the Democratic chairman of Connecticut. Obviously he had the people in Massachusetts.

He had a very small group--four people--working for him: Pierre Salinger, Larry O'Brien, Kenny O'Donnell, and Ted Sorenson. They're the ones who are remembered best. They covered a remarkable amount of ground. By this time the Stevenson movement was moving, really. It was moving, and I was very apprehensive, because I knew the composition of the California delegation--and this was before I started calling.

I wanted to find out whether this Stevenson thing was going equally rapidly in other states, so I asked the question of Governor Harriman--what the proportion of the New York delegation would be, and he said about seventy-five percent would be for Kennedy.

I asked him about Governor Meyner, or if I didn't ask him, Meyner was probably there, from New Jersey, and got very much the same reply. David Lawrence, who was then governor of Pennsylvania, gave me very much the same reply.

Chall: My, this was a VIP dinner, wasn't it?

Gatov: Yes, it was, and I don't recall what the occasion was, particularly. I guess they were all interested. They were all going to the convention, obviously, and Harriman was probably assembling people who were there. He felt he had to entertain us, the arrangements committee apparently, so these other dignitaries were invited. They were all very much involved on the national scene.

I could see that there was no Stevenson support, and they were very articulate about why they would never support Adlai Stevenson again. They said that there was absolutely no labor support for him, that he'd been a disaster to them in 1956. (He did much better in California in '56.) I perhaps should wait for the next tape to tell what happened next, because the next day, I called Adlai Stevenson, who

Gatov: was visiting somebody in New York, on Long Island, and had a forty-five minute conversation with him that was the most harrowing thing in my political life, I think, ever.

Chall: Yes, you alluded to that in your Kennedy interview. I think I would like to develop it further, because of your long past relationship with Adlai Stevenson, so maybe we can take that up next time.

[end Tape 8, side 2; begin Tape 9, side 1]
(Interview 9, March 17, 1976)

Chall: I wanted to have you give some background about the lunches and dinners that the Edward Hellers would have in order to introduce candidates to people whom they felt were important and influential in California politics.

Gatov: Well, the first one I remember is the Adlai Stevenson one that I referred to before, in 1952. Then I don't recall any more, at least that I was included in, until about 1959, I would guess it was. It might have been '58, but I think it was probably '59, when they invited me up to their place at Lake Tahoe, on the north shore. They had a lovely, large, comfortable, pleasant spot right on the lake on the Nevada side.

I don't recall exactly who was there, but they were all people who--there were probably ten of us--were all on the same track, so to speak, and identified with the same elements in the party. Joseph Kennedy [JFK's father] was invited, and he arrived. I don't know how old he was then. I don't remember how old he was when he died, but I suspect he was a good deal older than I thought he was, because he was a remarkably well-preserved person, physically and mentally, and a very handsome man, and articulate to the point of not being able to ever stop.

He was a showman, in a private kind of way. I don't think he ever had had public exposure on stage; I don't recall this as being part of his background. But he obviously expected to walk into a group of people and be the center, and continue to be center stage for as long as the function lasted. He didn't drink. Other people would interrupt themselves for something [laughs], but he never did.

He was a fascinating teller of experiences that he'd had, usually of a personal sort. I remember this, because I heard it later from President Kennedy. He spoke about his association with President Roosevelt, during that campaign (1932); and after he was elected, President Roosevelt asked what he could do for Kennedy.

TO: DEMOCRATS DESIGNATED TO CALL CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT CAUCUSES
RE THE CALIFORNIA PRESIDENTIAL DELEGATION PLEDGED TO
GOVERNOR EDMUND G. BROWN

FROM: WILLIAM A. MUNNELL, CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, BROWN
FOR PRESIDENT DELEGATION

I am writing to ask your assistance and leadership in a matter
of extreme importance.

As prescribed by law, Governor Brown has appointed an Executive
Committee, with myself as Chairman, to form a Presidential Delegation.
It will be the Committee's purpose -- and mine -- with your
assistance under procedures fully detailed below, to form a delegation
that shall be truly representative of California Democracy.

The members of the Executive Committee are:

William Munnell, Democratic State Central Committee Chairman

Roger Kent, Democratic State Vice-Chairman, North

Virginia Foran, Chairman, Women's Division, D.S.C.C.

Paul Ziffren, National Committeeman

Elizabeth Smith, National Committeewoman

Joseph Wyatt, President, C.D.C.

Ralph Brown, Speaker of the Assembly

Hugh Burns, President Pro tempore, State Senate

Congressman Harry Sheppard

Congressman George Miller

In addition, a twenty-nine member Advisory Committee whose
membership has already been announced in the press, has been
appointed to assist the Executive Committee in its duties.

It is of vital importance to our country and to the Democratic
Party, that we put together the strongest delegation in California's
history.

*Pages 1, 2 and 5 of 8 pages which instruct Democratic party officials
in 1960 delegate-selection process.*

To achieve this objective, it is the strong belief of Governor Brown and this Committee that the delegation must be formed by Democratic processes in keeping with the principles and traditions of our Party by giving recognition to a true cross-section of Democratic strength. We are therefore asking you to call a caucus in your Congressional District to nominate for possible service on the delegation, Democrats who live in your district.

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE CAUCUS? --

1. All members of the Democratic State Central Committee.
2. All members of the Democratic County Central Committees within the district.
3. All Assembly District, Congressional District or County Council officers.
4. One delegate per 20 members for all clubs that are chartered by the Democratic County Central Committee, California Federation of Young Democrats, or that are authorized to participate in the 1960 CDC Fresno Convention. We suggest that if clubs have insufficient time to meet before these caucuses, you may designate as their representatives those persons who were designated to represent their organizations at the Fresno Convention.
5. Democratic Councilmen and Supervisors, wherever possible.

(All who want to participate must sign attached form.)

WHAT SHOULD THE CAUCUS DO? --

The primary purpose of the caucus is to recommend to the Executive Committee not less than six nor more than ten representative Democrats. Preliminary to this action we suggest that you follow this procedure at the caucus:

It should also be emphasized that the individuals nominated by the caucus are nominees -- not delegates, and can become delegates only by action of the Brown Delegation Executive Committee.

It will be the responsibility of the Committee to take the whole state picture into account in achieving a strong and well-balanced delegation, and it must be remembered that only this Committee, meeting to review the nominations coming from 30 separate caucuses in 30 separate districts, will be in a position to do this.

It should be pointed out that many of the alternates may not be chosen until after the June primary. Since your caucus will designate the names of 6 to 10 persons for membership on the delegation -- and since numerically it will not be possible to accommodate many, those not approved as delegates will receive further consideration as alternates in subsequent action by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee will guarantee to select for the delegation no less than two of your caucus' recommendations and will try to select as many as possible. Those persons not chosen as delegates will be considered as alternate delegates and to fill any vacancies that may occur.

We are asking Don Bradley in the North, and Jess Unruh in the South, to coordinate the managerial and technical aspects of the delegation and its formation. Joe Wyatt, President of the California Democratic Council, as a representative of the Executive Committee, will assist in arranging your caucus. One of the above, or their designated representative, will attend your caucus to help in the solution of any question or problem that may arise.

Gatov: He said, "What I want is something that is not within your power to give me." This intrigued President Roosevelt, and he said, "What is it?" And Kennedy said, "I would like to be the former Ambassador to the Court of St. James." [Laughter] So instead, at that point he became chairman of the SEC and got the embassy later. He told stories on himself about that, too, which I use with my classes. They like it.

The purpose of the Securities and Exchange Commission was to try to correct certain practices and provide some protection for sharebuyers from some rather rapacious habits that previous Wall Street manipulators had used, and which Roosevelt felt should be stopped. So, Joseph Kennedy used to say about himself, "He appointed the man who knew all the tricks, because I've used every one of them." [Laughs] "I didn't need the money any more, I had mine, and I was more than happy to help him correct the abuses that were very widely indulged in."

It was a very, to me, practical instruction, [laughs] in using the fox to protect the henhouse, in a sense. [Laughs] As long as he's defanged! [Laughs] He stayed clear, I noticed, of any reference to his experience when he was ambassador. I think he sensed his audiences pretty well, and I think he realized that we, as a group, would not have been sympathetic to his views ~~on~~ those pre-World War II days. I noticed that it was avoided, and I'm sure that other people did too.

He spoke of his sons. He particularly spoke of Jack Kennedy; and in rather endearing terms, he made it plain he felt that politically, ~~he~~ was an idiot, that he couldn't possibly share his liberal views. However, he was willing to be a tolerant father. It was sort of a youth kick his son was on, [laughs] "Pretty hard to understand, but nevertheless he's my son, and I love him and I'm going to help him in every way I can."

This was the rather clever, I thought, looking back on it, separation of himself from his son, because his views--and he knew it--would never be acceptable. There was always a problem of trying to separate Jack Kennedy from his father, which his oppositon was always very anxious to focus on, naturally, and to emphasize that his father was helping him.

His father was always referred to as the Ambassador. He had his own staff, then, and during the campaign, and he was sort of programmed for certain special roles, but he did not appear very publicly. He stayed in the background of his own accord; ~~he~~ realized too that he was a political liability.

But he was one of the most entertaining and vigorous people you can imagine, and as I learned more about him later, and his amorous escapades, you could sort of understand how Rose, with her tremendously

Gatov: strong religious faith and her ~~dedication~~ to family and so forth, put up with it. People used to wonder, when they learned of all this, what made her ~~stick~~ around, [laughs] but there were lots of reasons I think besides just money.

Chall: Or being a Catholic?

Gatov: Or being a Catholic. When he was there, I got the feeling, and certainly this has been shored up by what I've read, he was a very strong family man. When he was home. When he wasn't home, well, he was doing another part of his life. But when he was home, I can't imagine that there was much of the sort of bickering that you'd suspect, or that I would suspect when a marriage was violated as often as that one was, and it was as well known. But anyway, he was a man of great charm.

Chall: So he charmed you all the first time, and that gave you a feeling that Jack Kennedy was probably all right to consider?

Gatov: We were all interested, I think as I've mentioned, in '56. Following that, it was a sustained interest that became more intense as the other possibilities appeared, and you sort of knew what you were dealing with. Who else was coming along, and so forth. As far as I was concerned, at any rate, and I believe this was true of the Hellers, our interest in him just continued to grow.

Chall: And the second time you came, it was the same story?

Gatov: It was a repeat performance, only with different anecdotes, and a little more closely tied to the campaign itself. He must have been a difficult man to deal with. I'm trying to think of the name of the white-haired lawyer from Boston who was sort of his number-one staff person. I hope it comes to me. If it doesn't, I'll give it to you in writing sometimes, and fit it in here. Hy Raskin.

Chall: Hy Raskin was on his--?

Gatov: Yes, the ambassador's personal staff.

Chall: But he had been on the Democratic National Committee. I remember the name.

Gatov: During the campaign, he was the ambassador's emissary, and he was doing things, particularly in California, trying to persuade Governor Brown to either come out for Kennedy, or you know, not fuss if Kennedy came into the primary--this kind of thing that Raskin could do without involving the candidate. It was a neat arrangement.

Chall: So they had planned this all out very, very carefully long in advance?

Gatov: I don't think there's ever been as well structured a campaign, over the long haul, as that one. I think they knew what they were doing every month as it went by. They had a schedule and kept to it.

Chall: What was the Hellers' method in bringing together people. Was it usually the two of them acting as host and hostess?

Gatov: It was very informal, and it was in their home in Atherton, too. Ed was not, in his later years, a very well man, but he loved to swim in Lake Tahoe. Freezing cold, as you know. Every morning, out he'd go, and swim sort of a breaststroke, as I recall, a certain distance, and then he'd turn around and swim back in.

The place was big enough so that there was room for everyone to do as they pleased. There were some speedboats, and canoes, and a rowboat or skiff, a very elegant little 1910 model which you could sit in and see women with parasols floating along the Thames. [Laughs]

As I said, the house was right on the beach, and there were usually some children present, some of the grandchildren. Breakfast was a self-service kind of thing. Lunch was served, and dinner was served, and cocktails were at seven. Dinner was at seven-thirty, at a great long table, and just a lot of lively conversation. You see, most of the guests knew each other, as well as knowing the Hellers. You never got the feeling that you were being organized. You were, of course. [Laughs]

Generally, somebody would go over to the casinos and gamble, or some of us would just stay home and read and watch the stars. There was a lot of room for walking, because the property was largely underdeveloped, or undeveloped, beyond where the houses were. There was a main house, and then there was their guest house, where Ed and Ellie stayed. They could get away from us for hours and hours, and really never know we were there.

Chall: So when they had people to meet candidates, or someone else in some political capacity, it was generally informal?

Gatov: In an informal, social way. You weren't told that you were coming up to meet anybody. You were just invited for the weekend. It was a lovely house-party environment that I guess is increasingly rare today, because nobody's got the staff to cope with them, or homes large enough to stash all these people away. It was delightful.

Chall: Was it the same kind of thing at the Harrimans?

Gatov: Oh, no. The Harrimans was much more formal. Very much more formal.

Chall: And more structured in terms of why you were there, political--?

Gatov: It was not social--just a group of friends enjoying each other for the weekend and so forth. The Harrimans was for one particular occasion. It was for dinner, or for lunch, to meet so-and-so. It was well understood ahead of time.

Chall: I guess that certain important aspects of politics are usually done socially this way.

Gatov: I suspect most important things are done in unstructured, rather relaxed settings, through lunch engagements and dinner engagements and so forth. This is something I don't think most people today yet understand about politics. They sort of feel that at an appointed hour, a group, pre-designated, meets and has an agenda. On the agenda are certain things to be decided, and when they leave the smoke-filled room, the decisions are made, and that's it.

I have never seen that. [Laughs] It may happen, but I've certainly never been any part of it. What usually happens is a connection almost like telephone company circuitry. Numbers of connections are made, and you realize that so-and-so is close to so-and-so, or somebody else. It's almost like knitting--it becomes a pattern of loops within loops within loops. These things evolve, in my experience, much more than they are determined at any given point. Except for formalizing the decisions.

I don't recall, for instance, when I discovered that the Hellers were so interested in Jack Kennedy. I don't recall anybody telling me about it, but I think it probably became apparent that, for instance, they would come to dinners that he was at, and they didn't come to dinners that were for other people. It's in this kind of way, I think, that you finally pick up the information that makes it possible for you to make some judgments, or some assumptions, about what's likely to happen, and who's likely to do what for who. [Laughs]

Chall: It's important that somebody knows who the major leaders are.

Gatov: Oh, certainly.

Chall: --and that these people are then watched by others, or pulled into the loops.

Gatov: Hy Raskin knew the Hellers well, and Larry O'Brien, and Jack Abbott, who just died, were all good friends, all three of them. I'm sure that they knew, through phone calls, and through coming out here, through talking with Jack, who were the people who were interested in Kennedy, and who

Gatov: were not. I suspect they had a reading--being revised, probably, from time to time--but I think they knew two years ahead of time who the likely people were, who would be interested in his candidacy here.

I think I mentioned--perhaps I forgot to tell you that when we were picking the delegation Larry O'Brien and Jack Abbott were staying at the Pine Inn in Carmel. We were all staying at the Highlands Inn, which is just south of Carmel.

Periodically, there would be a phone call, I think made by Jack Shelley. I know he made some of them, but there may have been other people, too. They would call O'Brien and Abbott and tell them, "So-and-so, and so-and-so, and so-and-so are now on the delegation. I think this one is for Kennedy. I don't know where that one is--probably for Johnson."

In other words, they [the Kennedy staff] were in constant communication with the delegation selections. There was nothing illegal about it--and nothing particularly legal about it, either. But it was done. I knew it was being done, and I presume other people knew it too. I suppose the Johnson folk were getting similar information.

Chall: I see, all around.

Gatov: Nobody said you weren't supposed to go to a telephone [laughs]. So there are really very few surprises, I think, politically, to people who are in touch. I mean, if you're not in touch, as I'm not now, for instance, I'm constantly surprised! [Laughs] I wasn't, in those days.

Chall: You feel there are people who are operating today who just aren't surprised at what's happening in their own parties. For instance, the coming of Governor Jerry Brown into the presidential primaries.

Gatov: That wasn't even a surprise to me. There'd been a great deal of speculation about it, and knowing him some, you knew that he was going to find it irresistible to get into this very heavily overstocked field, just to see. He assumes it's not going to hurt him, and so do some of the people who advised him to go in. I'm afraid I don't share that. I think he can be hurt by it, but that's just my opinion, and I'm not very close to it.

But I think people who are really involved, on a daily basis, are seldom surprised.

Chall: Are they surprised by the final results at the polls--the final results of an election? They can't be that sure.

Gatov: They're not sure, but much as we like to play down the role of polls-- "the only poll that counts is election day," and so forth--nevertheless, just following this primary, 1976, I think the polls have shown an uncanny accuracy, and primaries are notoriously difficult to predict, particularly in states like Massachusetts and New Hampshire, where independents are allowed to vote in either party's primary, which is a system I cannot imagine. [Laughs] They really came out, at least, in the order of succession, pretty closely. In Massachusetts, they missed a little bit. But I think they've been really remarkably on target.

A final word on that subject--I think it should be noted that the two heaviest spenders in this primary have been Ronald Reagan and George Wallace, and they are not doing well. So it tends to, a little bit, repudiate the notion that the more money you have, the surer you are to win. It's indispensable, but it's not the only ingredient.

Chall: So there are no surprises to the cognoscenti. [Laughs]

Gatov: I don't think there are. Unless it's a really close one, for instance, as the election of 1960 was.

The Democratic National Convention

Chall: One of the other behind-the-scenes activities that seems to have involved you was this matter of the tickets. Now, I don't really know in the long run, how important all that is--whether it's happened before or will happen again, but it's very interesting what happened with this matter of tickets. It certainly got a lot of press coverage. Apparently Ed Pauley and Paul Ziffren and the Democratic party in the state were all at odds here. Can you tell me about Ed Pauley and his influence? He backed out, finally, but then he backed out leaving, I would guess, a rather large debt.

Gatov: I wish I could recall that more clearly, and probably some of the others in southern California could fill you in on that better than I can. I didn't know him well, other than that he was a large contributor, whom I always looked at as rather unreliable. In other words, he was a man whom you would have every reason to believe from what he said would do a certain thing, and then would find he wasn't going to do a certain thing because some other little ingredient was missing.

So for those reasons, I have always regarded him as unreliable, and really never had much to do with him. Paul Ziffren I had to have a great deal to do with, naturally, because we were together on the national committee.

Gatov: To go back to what you said. What happened with the tickets has happened many times before, and will happen many times in the future. But it was of interest this particular time because of a particular situation. In the first place, California was the hope of Adlai Stevenson. I don't know whether we've gone into that in detail or not.

Chall: No, you haven't. Not to the extent that, I think, you will today.

The Adlai Stevenson Boom

Gatov: Well, by May of 1960, Adlai Stevenson was being very heavily pressured to come into the California primary. Not as a candidate, because it was too late, but to let it be known that he was available. In other words, to stop people committing on the first ballot to Jack Kennedy

So California was of considerable importance for that reason. Next, the tickets are naturally given in larger quantity to the home state, because there are more Democrats from that state who will want to come to the convention, than from New York say to California. So we had a tremendous chunk of tickets. I can't remember now what the numbers were, but it was a good size.

In addition to that, they'd been overprinted, which is habitual. You think you have a ticket, but you can't be sure until somebody places it in your hand. The overprinting for the day of the nominations was particularly heavy. That's the day, of course, that most people want to go.

The reason that it was important was the suspicion, which turned out to be quite accurate, that there was going to be a "spontaneous" demonstration staged for Adlai Stevenson inside the convention hall by the people in the balcony. It was important to the Stevenson supporters that their tickets be good for that day, and that they know how to work things, so to speak, so they could make sure that they got into the balcony and nobody else did.

This is exactly what happened, and I know this was the case because Paul Ziffren was sitting beside me on the convention floor, on the aisle of the front row of our delegation. A young woman who was active in recruiting the Stevenson people, and sort of floor marshal for them, came in and because she had no place else to sit, she sat on his lap. They were discussing what they were going to do outside the convention hall, and what they were going to do inside the convention hall.

Jack S. McDowell

CALIFORNIA FACT AND COMMENT



**Who Gets
Tickets To
Demo's LA
Conven-
tion?**

SACRAMENTO, May 14.—Democratic National Committeewoman Libby Smith's mission to Denver this week-end is being watched with more than casual interest by topside California Democrats.

They hope she'll succeed in bringing the Great Ticket Mystery out into the open at the Democratic Western States Conference.

Insiders here say the attractive committeewoman from Kentfield hopes to get some answers from Democratic National Chairman Paul Butler about next year's convention tickets and the size of California's delegation.

The ticket squabble is a sort of three-cornered intra-mural tug-of-war with National Committeeman Paul Ziffren of Los Angeles in one corner, Oilman Ed Pauley in another, and Mrs. Smith, State Chairman Bill Munnell and most of the rest of the party's California brass in the third.

Pauley reportedly has indicated he has a commitment to receive 5,000 of the 7,000 available guest tickets to the Los Angeles convention. Ziffren and Butler—one of his close buddies—have passed the word that Pauley doesn't have any such promise. And Ziffren is said to be maneuvering for the biggest share of tickets for himself.

Mrs. Smith and the rest of the party wheels want the bulk of the tickets avail-

able for distribution by Democratic office holders and party officials—to go to the contributors and deserving Democrats.

Pauley wants the tickets for a fund-raising drive to help pay off the big wad of money that was pledged to bring the convention to L. A.

But high-ranking Democrats complain they're learning all this by grapevine and bossman Butler hasn't given them any information. That's what Mrs. Smith hopes to get from him now.

ANOTHER STICKY problem is the size of California's 1960 delegation. Mrs. Smith reportedly will ask that California be rewarded with four "bonus" votes.

Traditionally, a state gets two extra votes each for electing a Democratic governor and senator.

She's also carrying word that California wants to continue its practice of having a large delegation with one-half vote rather than a full vote apiece.

Butler, on the other hand, is understood to be working to trim the size of the convention.

Elements of an explosion are present—particularly if Butler is unbudging and Governor Brown steps in. When and if this happens, the insiders say, he'll support the party group rather than Ziffren or Pauley.

Gatov: It apparently was no secret, because they could have gotten up and left. I just sat there and listened.

Chall: Walter Cronkite, many years later, in 1972, wrote that "The Stevenson organization had been allowed a mere thirty-four tickets to the hall, but had been able to obtain an additional 2000 tickets from various sources. Then the Stevenson camp learned that the Kennedy organization had been allotted nearly 2500 tickets. So Stevenson supporters pinned on 'Kennedy For President' buttons and walked away with another 1500 tickets.

"The strength of the Kennedy organization saved the day. If you watched television, you know that the convention had every appearance of being Stevenson country, but it wasn't, and John Kennedy was the nominee."*

I guess that from April 1959 until the day of the convention, more than a year later, there was such a turmoil over who was going to get tickets, and yet in the final analysis, it really didn't matter!

Gatov: No, it didn't matter, because there was wholesale cheating. I didn't know about the 2000 Kennedy tickets, which doesn't mean anything one way or the other. The Kennedy forces did not get into the hall in the numbers that the Stevenson people did, because, as he said, if you watched it on television, or even if you were there, which I was, you saw this rampaging mob and you assumed that Stevenson had just blown the lid off the convention hall.

Except, when you looked around, all the delegates were sitting there quietly in their chairs, with the exception of half of the California delegation. But you looked around at Illinois, and Pennsylvania, and New York, and so forth--you could see them in their seats. I finally got up and left the floor and went up to the balcony, to another part of the balcony, where the alternates sat, which was safe territory from the Stevenson people, and looked down on the floor, and then you could see in a second that the delegates weren't demonstrating. It was these people from whom the doors had been literally opened and they came on in droves.

Chall: Somebody had nominated Stevenson, is that what happened?

Gatov: Yes, and he was practically carried--terrified, really--into the hall. He hated mobs, and he didn't like being mauled and so forth. This thing was practically out of control.

*Walter Cronkite, "Cronkite on the Convention," The Daily Review [Hayward, Calif.], August 8, 1972.

Chall: I don't quite understand why he wanted to allow his name to be put into nomination at the convention, or why he could be persuaded that he might have actually another chance. He must have realized what the Kennedy forces were, and you have said that backing him was a "Stop Kennedy" move by, probably, the Johnson people. It could have been he didn't know that. But despite that, why would he have allowed himself to get into this corner? He'd been a reluctant candidate twice, and had lost twice, and done a noble job, but why again?

Gatov: But that reluctance, you know--you've watched Ronald Reagan's face on television. You see this sort of coy "Shucks, who, me?" look. In a much more sophisticated, elegant way Adlai Stevenson had a little bit of that uncharacteristic modesty. He was a modest man, I guess, but he wasn't really all that modest. He knew that he had a tremendous number of friends, and he was aware that he had changed the whole character of the Democratic party, really.

This can't help but affect people. Their ego involvement becomes enormous. Also you will be affected when you listen to political pros of the sort who were surrounding him at that time--Mike Monroney from Oklahoma, for instance, who was the head of the whole thing. (We talked about that last time, I believe.) He was an earthy, if very handsome and articulate, politician of the most experienced sort.

Eleanor Roosevelt was part of it, and what's-her-name--you've refreshed my memory of her once before--of the Washington Post. The mother of Katharine Graham.

Chall: Meyer, is that her name?

Gatov: Meyer. These were people who'd been on the scene, and watching it, for a long, long time. They were unanimously begging Adlai Stevenson to save them--save the country!--from the inexperienced young man who was Jack Kennedy, who had never introduced a significant bill, whose congressional attendance record was perfectly terrible, who was so cowardly that he stayed in the hospital when McCarthy was carrying on, and who hadn't even supported Adlai Stevenson in '52. This callow youth; even Harry Truman wouldn't have him.

Then, the other choices were Lyndon Johnson and Stuart Symington. Well, Symington, they could easily say had no experience, not adequate. And Johnson was a very doubtful commodity, as far as integrity and acceptability to the electorate. I could write the scenario of what poor Adlai got day in and day out during that time.

Chall: But Mike Monroney was not for Johnson?

Gatov: He was for Johnson.

Chall: He was for Johnson, and so he was really not in there only to stop Kennedy?

Gatov: No, he was the one who had put the thing together. I don't know what he said to Adlai. But he was able to get the other worthy people to buy his pitch--which was really what it was. I heard him deliver it to Roger Kent. They talked for forty-five minutes on my telephone. Don Bradley and I were standing in the kitchen listening to it.
[Laughs]

Roger was sitting there with the phone. Of course, we only got half the conversation, but we were ready to support him in his refusal to go on this national committee for Stevenson, which he wanted very much to do. Had they been able to get him, I think there would have been another strong persuasion to Stevenson that this thing really had some viability.

Chall: You had a painful experience telling Adlai Stevenson that you would not support him, and I suppose Roger Kent had to go through the same thing?

Gatov: I guess so. I don't recall when Roger actually did it. He may have done it through Monroney, and that was enough. It may have taken that pressure off.

Chall: But you did it face-to-face.

Gatov: No, I did it over the telephone in New York. It was about the middle of May. I'd been to Washington for something or other, and was at my brother's apartment en route home. Somebody in the Kennedy entourage had asked me if I would call Adlai, and he told me where he was. He was on Long Island visiting somebody, and I was equipped with a phone number. So I put in the call.

After awhile, I got him. He didn't believe me, but I was trying to tell him in a perfectly genuine way that, one, he was not going to get the nomination. Two, that there was no support for him outside of California, and three, if he would nominate Kennedy, he would never regret it--that was all I was able to say. The implication I know he knew, because it had been in the press, was that he would be made secretary of state, which was presumably something that he would have liked very much.

I was trying to be practical with him, by naming names and giving numbers and so forth, which I then had currently in my head. The figures from Harriman in New York State and figures from Connecticut, from John Bailey. There was no support for him, except in California.

Gatov: He was quite upset. He made me feel very badly, sort of a traitor. He said, "Well, you're just swallowing the Kennedy line." I of course protested that I wasn't, that this was my own estimate of the thing. Then he invited me--he was leaving that day to go back to Bloomington, Illinois--would I come. I said no. There wasn't anything more to talk about. I'd said everything that I could say, and if he should change his mind at any time, he knew where to find me, and I would relay the word very quickly.

But I just hated to see him put his reputation--which was so enormous, and would stay that way--on the line. Kennedy was going to get the nomination. The mathematics of it was there, unless something catastrophic were discovered, or happened to him.

But it didn't work, and I must say I've seen it not work on many other people, because they--in the vernacular of the trade--they begin to believe their own publicity. [Laughs] They think they are as great as everybody's telling them they are.

Chall: Did you see Stevenson after that, at any time when he was in the Bay Area?

Gatov: Oh, yes.

Chall: And you remained friends?

Gatov: Yes. It took a little while. I didn't see him at the convention, but I did see him within a week following it. There was some sort of a gathering at the Fairmont, and I was there. He kissed me hello, and then turned to somebody and said, "You know, in my opinion, Libby is the shrewdest woman in politics today." I didn't take that as a compliment, [laughs] at all.

But time passed, and he obviously didn't hold grudges. When I got to Washington, I saw him several times. He kept inviting me (but I never was able to do it) to come see him in New York. I did talk to him on the phone several times when he was up there, and saw him, occasionally, when he came down to Washington.

By that time, the relationship was all repaired. We were sort of back to our usual friendly state.

Chall: Was he disappointed that he had not become a part of the Kennedy administration?

Gatov: Yes. Of course Kennedy did appoint him ambassador to the U.N.

Chall: And after--I'm sure that you've read The Best and the Brightest--even if he had nominated Kennedy, he probably wouldn't have had that coveted position at all.

Gatov: Probably not. Or even if he had been secretary of state, it wouldn't have been worth having. McGeorge Bundy, you know, would have just romped all over him. [Laughs] He was such a decent person, but he lacked the unpleasant mental qualities that I think distinguish people who are good at politics, and people who aren't. I really believe that people who are good politicians are able to appreciate the dark side of peoples' personalities, and not expect them always to be their best selves.

I don't think Stevenson ever caught on to that. I think he was used. Apparently, he was used when he was governor. Certainly he was used to go into that campaign. It was a hand-picked affair, in which he was protesting all the way up to the 1952 convention, until after he'd made his welcoming speech. He didn't appear to know how much had already been done, and that there was no way out. He couldn't possibly have gotten out of that. It was all set before the delegates ever got to Chicago.

Chall: Only he was surprised?

Gatov: Only he was surprised! And it's because, really, he was such a decent person that I don't think his mind was capable of making the corkscrew turns, or whatever it is, to understand what was going on.

Chall: Did you ever see him when he came to the Bay Area for some of the celebrations for the United Nations?

Gatov: I think one of them, only.

Chall: He was still ambassador?

Gatov: Yes. I do seem to recall, but I don't remember what year it was. I've seen Marietta Tree a number of times, before his death and since.

Chall: Was he, you think, disappointed in his last years?

Gatov: Yes. I think he was disappointed in a whole lot of things. I think he was disappointed in his personal life. I think he was frustrated as ambassador to the United Nations. I think he was disappointed in his sons. They may be very fine people, but he never seemed to have any particularly close rapport with them.

Gatov: I thought he was a lonely man. I felt very sorry for him. He'd given so much. I think he would have been happier if he'd gotten totally out of the diplomatic and political field and become president of a university or something. He would have been then with the kind of people that he liked, all the time instead of just part of the time.

Chall: He'd have the stature that he in a sense deserved.

Gatov: Because he had a keen and beautiful mind, and was really a very gentle person, a perfectionist, which everybody, of course, has mentioned. Literally, you would see him editing speeches and he wouldn't give you that single copy to give to the press so they could get out of the dinner and go do a nice story. Instead, they had to sit there and get angry! They don't like to do it that way! [Laughs] And they pay you back, frequently, by the use of a few adjectives here and there.

Some Other Activities of the California Delegation

Chall: Well, I just wanted to get a good final understanding, in a sense, of what that activity with Adlai Stevenson was at the convention. What did you do during the convention? What do delegates do, general speaking?

Gatov: They meet. [Laughs] And they will meet either en masse, at a caucus of the delegation, or they meet in little clutches, or they meet in bars, or they meet for lunch, or they meet around pools, or in each others rooms.

Chall: Is it fun and games?

Gatov: No, -it's much more serious. But this one was the one to end them all, in my own experience. Usually, there's enough going on, and enough speculation, and of course, the gossip is just rampant. It's very difficult to sort out fact from fancy.

[end Tape 9, side 1; begin Tape 9, side 2]

Chall: You were telling me about what all the delegates were doing, and the rumors--?

Gatov: At that particular convention, we were staying at the Hollywood Knickerbocker, which is still standing. [Laughs] I'm astonished! It was a crummy hotel, but I guess as good as any of them could have been. At least our whole delegation was together. I don't believe there were any other delegations in that hotel; we had the whole place to ourselves.

Gatov: But the venom and the hostilities that developed in the course of that convention were really most unpleasant. Each of the contenders--each of the potential candidates--had established someone as their liaison with our delegation and with every other delegation. So all of us who were for Kennedy, for instance, knew that so-and-so--I can't remember who it was, now--was our liaison. Probably he was just an amiable, bright young man who could listen and tell what he was hearing and could identify people pretty well. He would attend all our sessions that he could find, that were public--

Chall: They aren't always.

Gatov: Not always. This is not usually anything particularly contrived. In other words, if something comes up--and I'll give you an instance in a minute--Pat Brown, who was chairman of the delegation, would probably send word down to the headquarters office to, "See if you can get hold of these five or six people, and ask them to meet me in my suite at four o'clock."

This might be to discuss something in the platform--what should be our position, trying to sound out sentiment before we got into the caucus of the whole delegation. You see there's not very much that a delegation could affect other than to predetermine its position on rules matters, or credentials matters. Are we going to fight the seating of the regular Mississippi delegation or aren't we? Then Pat, who was head of the delegation, no doubt discussed with his closest advisors what it would do to him politically if he didn't take a position on the side of the struggling blacks if he stayed with the white Ku Klux Klan types.

In other words, should he try to get the delegation on record? Should he try to go for the whole thing, get them all, get it unanimous? Or be content with fifty percent? How much work should be spent on it? There might be a credentialing matter.

Then, the platform. There might be three different kinds of phraseology dealing with, for instance, the recognition of Red China in those days. Now, should we go for total recognition, exchange of ambassadors, or do we just try to establish trade relations? These are all important things, but they don't seem like anything after it's over.

But they were very attention-consuming at the time, because you're trying to think over what it means, and what the ultimate effect was going to be. What was it going to do to the candidate if you saddle him with something like this? There was the abortion issue, for instance, in '72. I think it was misplaced. I'm sorry that they did it, because it hurt McGovern, even though I'm all for it.

Gatov: These are the kinds of things that frequently go on. The unpleasant part of this particular one was the dropping away of Kennedy support, initially, to Stevenson. Of course, there were Stevenson buttons all over the hotel. I'd find people that I'd painfully gotten tickets for, so they could come down to the convention and I thought that they'd at least be nice enough to wear Kennedy buttons, but they were running around with Stevenson buttons! And laughing about it! Ha, ha, ha! [Mocking] I didn't think it was funny at all. I had a very difficult time keeping cool, because I thought it was very serious.

That meant that I had to go back and recheck, double check, daily check the people that I had listed as Kennedy supporters, or as Stevenson supporters, so that I could hope to get them before the final vote was cast.

Chall: This was among the delegates?

Gatov: This is delegates working on delegates, which is the most effective thing. I can just remember two outstanding things. One was that Bill Roth finally abandoned Adlai Stevenson thirty minutes before the roll was called. [Laughs] It was that close. He was my final victory.

The other was that most of the women on the delegation did not go with Kennedy. They stayed with Stevenson.

Chall: You hadn't anticipated that either?

Gatov: No, I hadn't. I really hadn't. I'd thought that they would go. But they were all of them, like me, people who'd come into politics because of Stevenson, largely. Their code of ethics was such that they just wouldn't abandon him in his hour of need--that was the way they felt about it. I'm sure they didn't regard me very highly because of my move.

Chall: In addition to working to be sure that you had all the votes that you wanted for Kennedy, were there duties that you had as national committee-woman once you got to the convention?

Gatov: Well, there were privileges. I can't recall the duties. You mean at the convention?

Chall: Yes. You helped set it up. I know you had quite a bit of work to do.

Gatov: Yes. I had a car and a driver, which made me terribly popular. [Laughs] In Los Angeles, it was really a significant assistance.

Gatov: Yes, as I recall, I was supposed to--though nobody told me--participate in seeing that the various functions occurred as scheduled. In other words, I spent a good deal of time in the headquarters of the convention office, in the hotel. I'll never forget--I don't remember what the press was saying, because I never had time to read the papers during that period--but obviously they were saying that, you know, Kennedy's strength was mounting, and something about Stevenson. Bales of telegrams began coming in!

They came in in such profusion that you couldn't get them out of the cartons that they were delivered in and into peoples' mailboxes in the hotel. It was days late. This was an experience that shook particularly the legislators on the delegation as I told you last time. They were very unfriendly telegrams, saying such things as, "If you don't vote for Adlai Stevenson, don't bother to come home."

Chall: Who'd have masterminded that kind of campaign? Is that something that would normally take place?

Gatov: I don't think so. This had ingredients that I'd never seen before or since, of hero-worship to an extent that was just unbelievable. I don't know whether even the people who sent these were real people.

Chall: A real dirty trick!

Gatov: You can go to a Western Union office and write twenty-five telegrams and put different names on them, but there was no way to check the authenticity of these, at least as far as I was concerned. I've never seen anything like it.

Eventually they were distributed to the recipients, and it shook them up. I'm sure it made some of them, particularly some of the local legislators, decide they were going to stay with Stevenson, rather than risk the wrath of the home folks.

When I got back, some of the delegates from the congressional district that I was in--I think it was still the first at that time--we were called to account by the Marin Democratic Club, which still existed at that time. There was a public meeting, and we were invited to come, and please explain why we had voted the way we had.

Chall: How did they know how you had all voted? Was that published?

Gatov: The records were all kept, and I presume that the press got it. I don't know. As far as I was concerned, there was nothing secret about it. I do remember Bill Roth and me explaining to these angry people why we had done what we had done. They were not approving at all.

[end Tape 9, side 1]

Assessing the Election Results

[begin Tape 9, side 2]

Chall: Is this a reason that Kennedy lost the election in California, do you think?

Gatov: No, I don't. The club strength--by this I'm referring to CDC and the integral parts of that--was much stronger, I felt, in northern California than it was in southern California. Northern California is normally the more liberal end of the state for both parties. Kennedy carried northern California by 150,000 votes.

But we knew election night, by some people we had working in the precincts in southern Alameda County, what was going to happen. It took the shock effect off, because these people were phoning in. In those days, you know, we mostly had paper ballots. You could walk into any precinct and look at the roster, and see how the vote in that precinct was going.

These people of ours would call back to the headquarters and say, "You won't believe these ballots. They're voting for Nixon and then every Democrat! They're voting for Nixon and EVERY DEMOCRAT!!" This came in from, oh, San Leandro all the way down. They kept coming in from the Central Valley.

So the picture we got of election night was that this was religious prejudice at its worst. The Bay Area particularly, is heavily Catholic, and I think has less racial, religious, and other kinds of prejudice than a lot of places do. We could believe what we were seeing, that he was going to carry that part very big.

I don't know how interested you were in what was going on in those days, but the fundamentalist churches, including the Baptist church, were really doing some dreadful things and passing out literature after their services, and so forth. Every scare tactic imaginable about what was going to happen if you elected a Roman Catholic to the White House. The Pope practically was going to move the Vatican to the White House lawn.

It was a very bitter, unpleasant thing. I think this is what did it in southern California, where there are far, far more people of those persuasions than there are in this part of the state. In those days, too, absentee ballots were not counted until within ten days after the election, so starting the morning after, we had to explain to the Kennedy people in Washington that though they thought they had carried the state, they hadn't carried the state, and they weren't going to carry the state.

Gatov: We lost it by only about thirty thousand, but the difference in the vote--I'll show you what it was. It was 150,000, plus here [northern California]. So he lost by 180,000 in southern California, including the absentee ballots. You can tell about those, pretty much. First of all, you know the registration of the people who have taken out absentee ballots, and you know geographically where they are, so that if you had a heavy concentration of Republican absentees around the state, and Democrats in the south, you know it was gone. That's all been corrected now. I mean, the absentee ballots are counted on election day now. But the religious thing was really very bitter and very subtle and hard to come to grips with, because it was never out where you could find it.

Chall: That's what it was, rather than some of the liberals sitting on their hands?

Gatov: Some liberals sat on their hands, but I don't think it was significant. Of course, the ones that I knew were all up here. If they sat on their hands, nobody missed them. Their place was taken, as it always is in politics. There is never a vacuum.

The Convention as a Procedure to Choose the Party's Candidate

Chall: I'm going to quote you from a letter that you wrote, about conventions. It was in terms of having, I guess, young people there, looking at them. But I think that in terms of what a convention is, it's an interesting statement. "Possibly you are thinking in terms of making awards to students; it is my belief that a national convention is such a volatile complex, only those with a highly developed sensitivity to political currents, moods and relationships, can really grasp what is going on. And it takes maturity, patience, and understanding to get along with the staff and delegates who are in a state of high emotional tension and physical exhaustion." My question to you is, is that the way to select a president? [Laughter]

Gatov: What was the age group that this was addressed to? Was this high school students? I don't think I felt this way about college students.

Chall: I think this was--to Rhoten A. Smith, director of the Citizenship Clearing House. I think they were to be fellows, possibly college, but I'm not sure. My impression was that it was college students.

Gatov: It sounds like it, doesn't it? Well, my son, for instance, who was then--seventeen? He was still in high school. He was in the last year of high school, about to begin it; he went to the convention, and was

Gatov: a volunteer on the Kennedy newspaper staff. Pierre Salinger was running it, and Don Bradley's son was also there, and Kathleen Brown, Pat's daughter.

These three found each other very quickly. They were staying at different hotels. At least Dan was staying at a different hotel from me. I don't know where the others were. I learned from him during the convention, what they used to do after they had to delivered the Kennedy paper: they'd then take off, at George Miller, Jr.'s urging, to a Stevenson rally.

They were all madly for Adlai! [Laughs] Just as involved as they could be, Dan to the point of writing me an anonymous letter which was put in my mailbox at the hotel. It was the most heartrending thing I'd ever read! [Laughs] I suspected where it came from, but it wasn't until later that he admitted authorship.

After the nominating night was over, I went out toward where my car and driver were supposed to be and I found him sitting on the curb looking as though he'd lost his last friend. Oh, I just ached for him! But what could you say at the time, except to just bear with it? He felt, and I think a lot of young people did in those days, that the man who had been sort of the household god all their growing-up years, had suddenly been rejected for no good reason. The man hadn't changed-- just the times.

It obviously didn't hurt him, because he's now the manager for the John Tunney campaign, [laughs] so he's back in the political business.

It was rough go for all three of them. I saw them after that, and it really hurt them.

Chall: They were the young idealists.

Gatov: Yes, and they hated to see their parents turn to "machine politics," is what they were thinking, or I guess were being told by George Miller and so forth.

Chall: Well, I suppose in a sense that's true, but one has to make a decision whether it's machine politics or not.

Gatov: Well, I didn't think it was machine politics at all. I thought it was all based on persuasion that Kennedy really was the best man.

Chall: Establishment politics, perhaps.

Gatov: It was hard to say who was really the Establishment then. I mean, Adlai was far more so. He was the titular head of the party, and had been for eight years. The thing was that John Kennedy had a vitality about him and a creativity and a spontaneity. I liked the orderliness of his mind, and the orderliness of his procedures, and the people who worked for him.

You felt that, after the Eisenhower years, which were just, you know, a big cream puff, here was going to come the energy that would push us on down the road. There was no reason to believe that Stevenson could beat Nixon.

Chall: Nor I suppose was there a reason to believe, by this time, that Stevenson could be the energetic administrator and leader that Kennedy might be.

Gatov: The pragmatic aspect of it. I have never seen any sense in politically jumping into a ravine if there's a rope ladder handy. It doesn't make any sense to me to deliberately scuttle something that is good and acceptable, and that furthermore has the broad acceptance that it takes to get anywhere politically.

This takes me back to the Helen Douglas campaign of 1950, when some people--I was one of them--tried to persuade her not to run, to stay in her congressional seat and not risk it. Because she was a very liberal person and a very outspoken woman, and we knew, by this time, that Richard Nixon was going to let her have it.

Well, she was persuaded by others closer to her to go ahead. These people would say, "I would rather lose with Helen than win with somebody else." Well, it was a double loss. It took her out of public life. It was a terrible loss, I think. I don't see any sense in confusing politics with religion, and I think a lot of people do.

Chall: That's an interesting point. I guess it takes a while for people to understand that.

Gatov: Well, people get kind of religiously worked up about it. It's attributing all kinds of things to candidates that make them superhuman, and they're not. They're just people.

Chall: I would take it that you feel that despite all the problems of a convention, that somehow the persons who come out of it are generally acceptable to most of the voters of the party.

Gatov: Well, I think that they are looked at from that point of view: who is the best candidate we have who can win the election. Now, we're certainly going head-on into that right now in '76. I think that will be the criteria.

Chall: Would you be in favor of a national primary?

Gatov: No. I think that has even more of the drawbacks that we have today, of requiring an extraordinary amount of money, and an incredible amount of previous travel. The difficulties in getting media identification, which is already a problem to many of the new entrants into it, is, I think unquestionably, what pushed Birch Bayh out. He was not well enough known. Certainly Mo [Morris] Udall is finding it a great problem.

To me, the national primary just compounds all that. In fact, it practically guarantees that only those who ran four years or eight years earlier, or flew the Atlantic on a cup of gasoline or something, can possibly get it. I think the system we have is bad enough. I wouldn't oppose regional primaries, provided they were scheduled with some sort of sense.

Chall: Leaving time enough?

Gatov: Leaving time enough to recuperate, and to think. One of the reasons, unquestionably, that Jimmy Carter, for instance, is doing so well is because he's one of the unemployed candidates. He doesn't have to be governor of anything. He doesn't have to vote on anything in Congress. He can spend his entire time campaigning, and it shows! It's superb.

Chall: That's the type of organization that almost looks like a Kennedy type, at least as far as starting long in advance.

Gatov: Long in advance, careful preparation, and knowing who their people are. And they do know. At least they do in this state.

Chall: They do in this state?

Gatov: Yes. They started a long time ago. I first met him out here in September, I think, or August of last year. He was well known then; well known enough so that this party that was given for him in Marin County attracted 250 people. The biggest crowd this particular place had ever had.

Chall: What about Theodore White's book on the president, the campaign of 1960?

Gatov: The Making of the President?

Chall: The Making of the President. Do you think that his books on the making of the president are reliable, well-researched? If you didn't know very much about it, would you read a book of his and come to a pretty good understanding?

Gatov: I think he's a remarkably resourceful writer. I think that's undoubtedly the best of the books. I believe I've read them all. I'm not sure. But I think it [1960] was the best of the books because it was the most interesting campaign, too, the most interesting situation.

Aboard the Kennedy Whistlestop Tour

Gatov: I did disagree with him about one thing. He wrote off the whistlestop tour that Kennedy took here, early in September, as a useless and time-consuming exercise. Actually, I felt that--I was on the train, and watched it, and I felt that it was essential, almost a watershed in his development as a candidate.

When candidates start, they're pretty awful. [Laughs] They're underequipped, and untrained. They don't do a very good job, usually. On that trip--first of all Kennedy had a cold. I had gone up to Portland to get on the train. I went back to speak to him about something, and he had a bad cold. He was grumpy as could be. I finished my business and went to bed.

I woke up the next morning and he and Pat Brown were out on the rear platform. We were at Dunsmuir, which is a switch point, an unscheduled stop. They were in their bathrobes, and the yard was full of railroad workers. Of course, they knew the train was going to stop.

Pat was his most informal best, and sort of warming them up beautifully, and Kennedy came out. I also put on a bathrobe and dashed out to see what was going on. Kennedy was plainly embarrassed.

Well, the next stop--I guess that was Red Bluff or something--they were both dressed. Kennedy was feeling more comfortable, but he was just as stiff and rigid as he could be. He'd never stood in the back end of a train and talked to a miscellaneous collection of people gazing up at him. It was a new experience.

Chall: Even with all the primary campaigning he had done?

Gatov: But he hadn't used this particular technique. Somebody said, "Where's Jackie?" and he said, "Mrs. Kennedy deeply regrets that she is unable to be with us." [Laughs] Well, by the end of the day, he was able to say, "Jackie can't be with us because she's pregnant." That was a pretty big step.

Gatov: By the time we got down to Bakersfield, well into the next day, he was saying, "Jackie couldn't come with me because we're going to have a son in November. You want to know why I know it's going to be a boy? She told me!"

I just use this as an illustration of the development of his ease of communication. From the rather private person who didn't discuss his marriage and his family situation in public, to being able to give Jackie credit for telling him they were going to have a baby boy. I thought it provided him a perfect format for doing it. It seemed to me from then on he was much more relaxed with miscellaneous people.

Chall: Generally speaking, do you think this is a good way to campaign, or campaign in certain states?

Gatov: I don't think you can make any hard and fast rule about it. Robert Kennedy did it in '68 from Fresno to Sacramento. It took us nine hours. And it was Memorial Day--this was the purpose of it. Memorial Day, therefore the farmworkers were on a holiday. I never saw so many Spanish-American faces in my life. He carried every county that the train went through, and he didn't carry some of the ones south of it, which had pretty much the same demographics as the ones that he went through. As a use of Memorial Day maybe that was the best you could do.

Chall: It may be a way to meet certain kinds of people in California, because of the way our state is set up.

Gatov: Yes, and it has its advantages, because at every station the train takes people on and lets others off. So the local "wheels" get on bearing grapes and all sorts of things, gift produce. They come back and meet the candidate, and he says hello to everybody. It's really a delightful way to campaign; and it does get good publicity.

Chall: What was your role in this whistlestop? You were there.

Gatov: I was there to do the same thing I did later, which is greet people. I had a list of who was coming on the train, and the chances were pretty good that I knew them. So I'd see that they had whatever it was they wanted--a sandwich or a drink, or something, and that they got to meet the candidate, because it's a revolving-door kind of procedure.

They'd spend a few minutes, usually in groups of two or three, with Kennedy, which they liked. The local press was on board, and we had cameras anyway. Pictures would be taken and sent to the local paper. It was a beautifully-run operation. The railroad was superb, and the telephone company was equally superb. They had banks of telephones at every station stop for the press to use. The press loved it. It doesn't take much out of them. They hear the same speech over and over. [Laughs] They don't have to think much.

Gatov: But to the extent that it's possible to humanize a campaign, it's a wonderful antidote to the television cameras, I think.

Scheduling and Other Campaign Duties

Chall: What else did you do during the campaign?

Gatov: My particular job was the scheduling of other than the candidate or the vice-presidential candidate. I didn't have anything to do with the Johnson campaign or the Kennedy schedule. I had a great deal to do with the visiting governors and senators and so on, who all wanted to come and participate in the campaign and help raise money. We wanted them to do that.

Of course, they all wanted to go to Los Angeles and San Francisco, [laughs] and no place else. Joe Cerrell was doing it, who is a pro in southern California, and I was doing it northern California. We'd talk at the beginning and end of each day--the end of my work day, which usually was about four.

We would find out where the visitors were coming from, to try to make it sensible, so if they were coming from Arizona, they'd come into Los Angeles and then go up to San Francisco and out. I never understood the geography or the politics of southern California, so I can't make any comment about that, but here we had geography galore. We had been able to find out where there were communities and small towns where people had come from Oklahoma, or from Michigan and Illinois. You'd be surprised--

Chall: Pockets of them?

Gatov: Pockets of them! So then when, for instance, the governor of Oklahoma came out, he was too polite to protest loudly that he didn't want to spend two days in the Valley. But we assured him he'd meet many of his former Oklahomans. He came back, interestingly enough, on a night that we had a fund-raising dinner at the Palace Hotel. It was the night that the Peace Corps was born in the Cow Palace.

His name was Governor Edmondson. I was talking to him, and asked how his trip had gone, and he was actually very enthusiastic about it, because he did indeed meet plenty of Oklahomans, and he was able to sort of "old-home-town" them. He got a lot of attention from the local press. He was treated very royally [laughs] by those who appreciated him. He'd have been drowned, you know, if he'd stayed in San Francisco. Nobody would have paid the slightest bit of attention.

Gatov: So this was the kind of thing that I did. And I would try to cooperate with the press section on public exposure for them, getting them on various shows in between events. In other words, "He gets in at nine and he's leaving at eight tonight. What can we do?"

Chall: Twelve hours--how to keep him busy?

Gatov: There was no problem, really, because there was a great deal of enthusiasm, and everybody wanted to raise money. So we would give them the most attractive personalities we could find.

Chall: The clubs, and--

Gatov: The clubs and county groups, labor groups, ethnic groups. There was a wonderful woman from the national committee--Kay Folger was her name--and she was the one with whom I dealt at the Washington end. She was the one trying to schedule all these people.

Then Joe and I would work out the economics of it. In other words, it cost so much, there were so many in the party, and how we could collect the money from various places they went. It was quite an involved thing.

The most fun I had was pinning a saucer-sized button on an elevator operator at City Hall. George Christopher was then mayor, and apparently this large black elevator operator turned up with a very normal-sized Kennedy button on him, and Mr. Christopher didn't like it, and made him take the button off.

The press was around as usual, and reported it. So we decided that my job was going to be to pin the button back on as an assertion of his First Amendment rights. And we had this huge new button. [Laughs] The elevator operator decided to agree, and the union said this was fine, the photographers were there and poor George Christopher! Because he had done something he had no business doing, you know. So this was photographed, [laughs] and it was one of the comic relief things that do happen.

I remember meeting Ted Kennedy for the first time. His headquarters for the western states, which was his territory, were in our building, in our office in the back part. We realized that his greatest asset, because he was personally not very well known, was that his voice was identical to Jack Kennedy's. So for whatever use we could make of him for radio and television and so forth--it just sounded exactly the same.

I remember driving him up to a luncheon in Sacramento. I had a convertible in those days, which I just loved. Something told me that when I went to pick him up, I had better get over in the right-hand seat.

Gatov: It was the right thing to do. He apparently didn't like women drivers. I just said something like, "Why don't you drive?" and he didn't object. I realized later that it would have been very wrong to have [laughs] said, "Sit here."

Chall: I guess that's something you have to know, or you did in those days.

Gatov: Yes, you did in those days. It was the first time that I'd heard him. When we got to Sacramento, he made his speech at this luncheon, and he was terribly funny. He was talking about how he'd gone off a ski jump for the first time in his life, in the course of the campaign. I don't know why that was involved, but it was, and his tale about it.... I happened to know something about skiing and jumping--my brothers used to jump--so I was particularly entertained. He really had the place in stitches.

As I say, the inflections of his voice and the tone of his voice were just identical.

Chall: Was his wife out with him much?

Gatov: Yes. She didn't go out with him very much. I don't know if she was pregnant or not, but they had had a couple of parties at their house that they'd rented down on the Peninsula that I went to. She was a very sweet, and in those days, very simple (in the best sense) sort of person. It was long before any of the problems that she later developed.

Chall: She was helpful to Kennedy?

Gatov: Oh, yes. She seemed to me to be.

Kennedy Election Issues

[from beginning of Tape 13, side 1]

Chall: I still have a few questions left over from the 1960 election. After the general election of 1960, Khrushchev is supposed to have taken the credit for throwing the election to John Kennedy, because he refused to release [Francis Gary] Powers, the U-2 pilot, to the United States.*

Gatov: I'm quite unaware of anything related to that. [Laughs]

*Earl Mazo and Stephen Hess, Nixon, A Political Portrait, (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 206.

Chall: I see.

Gatov: Quemoy and Matsu was all that I remember from the debates that went on.

Chall: I see. What about the issues of Quemoy and Matsu, and also Kennedy recommending that we organize the Cuban exiles in this country to overthrow Castro? Did that affect any of your campaigning in any way?

Gatov: Cuba didn't seem to enter into California. I think it was a much more important issue, probably, in the East. I don't recall it. Quemoy and Matsu [laughs] were, to me, ridiculous. It apparently made awfully good debating, and it was a good point for them to argue about. It was, like a number of issues at that time. One was the missile gap, which turned out to be nothing at all.

The thing that struck me about Kennedy's appeal was none of these specifics, but the feeling that he gave people that he could convey his energy into the system and make it work beneficially. It was just that simple.

Chall: Do you think that Jerry Brown does that?

Gatov: Yes. I think it's a similar sort of projection of personality. I've been delighted to watch Jerry Brown in recent months. He's got a much lighter touch than he used to have. He's dropped his sarcasm, at least as far as public display is concerned. He's much warmer to people. He understands about trying to lift their spirits. I don't know whether he's been studying any of the Kennedy tapes, but it looks to me as though he has been, because he's become far more expressive than he was in his campaign for governor, and much more friendly and responsive to people.

Chall: Were you concerned about the problem of Catholicism when you were setting up the campaign in northern California--not just when you were getting the results from southern Alameda County?

Gatov: Yes. We knew that Catholicism was going to be a problem, but we also felt that it would be less of a problem at this end of the state than at the southern end of the state, because there were simply more Catholics here. The Bay Area is roughly estimated--or was then--to be about a third Catholic, which is a heavy enough mix. It had been there for a long time, and was fairly established. It was no new intrusion into the "ethnic purity" of the neighborhood.

We felt that his religion was not going to be much of a problem. We thought there might be certain pockets of it. That it would be an issue in southern California, particularly in Orange County, we were

Gatov: quite sure of. There are far more fundamentalist Protestants than there are at this end. I learned that also in the PERCC [Public Education and Research Committee of California], as we called that Planned Parenthood legislative committee.

Our opposition on the abortion issue just came roaring out of southern California. Archbishop McGucken here sort of annually dispersed a letter to all the leaders of the parish churches. That was the beginning and the end of it. I learned from several sources that there really is a split in the state among churches.

Chall: Among the Catholics?

Gatov: The Catholics are concentrated, more or less, up here.

Chall: Now when John Kennedy won by two-tenths of a percent, it was found that there had been chicanery in Chicago, to put Illinois over, and also in Texas, where the ballot boxes were stuffed.

Gatov: Are you saying it was found that--?

Chall: It was assumed that.

Gatov: Well, I think it's a little different. [Laughs]

Chall: You're right; although I guess Mazo feels that--*

Gatov: Oh, Mazo, really! [Disparagingly] [Laughs]

Chall: Do you think there was any chance that there might have been fraud in California; that it might have thrown the election to Nixon?

Gatov: No, and I tend to discount the other two, too. If you really have an instance of election fraud, there's nothing to stop you from going ahead with plenty of legal remedies open to anybody who has evidence of election fraud. So I tend to discount the Illinois and Texas allegations-- I'm not going to say everything was pure and peachy-keen, but I think that one side can play and the other side can play.

California has, in my experience, been uniquely clean. Soapy Williams once, when he was governor, came out here to Monterey for a Democratic dinner, and I was there. He was warning these people to be

*Mazo and Hess, Nixon, A Political Portrait, pp. 245-250.

Gatov: alert for election frauds, that these were the common ways, and he proceeded to illustrate them--the false bottoms on the ballot boxes, and this sort of thing. He was booed! This was extraordinary to me. These people really resented the inference that our system was subject to fraud, on either side!

I've never heard of a substantiated case. I've participated in one recount election, which was a supervisor's election in Marin County, and the ballots were in bags, canvas bags. Normally, they should have been delivered to the county clerk's office the night of the election. They were paper ballots in those days, and they should have taken them directly to the county clerk's office as soon as the counting was finished.

For some reason, that was not done. The bags were sealed only with Scotch tape, and they were left in a sheriff's substation overnight in Marin City. The candidate in whom I was interested had checked the precincts by telephone. She had somebody there to call in to her and tell her what the count was from each of those precincts--and yet when the official count was given the next day from the registrar of voters' office, her opponent had exactly twenty more votes in each of those precincts. So she demanded a recount.

It was very interesting. It was a black community--Marin City--and we couldn't find anybody who could remember who they voted for. [Laughs] Nobody! They couldn't remember a thing. So she went ahead with the recount and won it. There really was evidence. Somebody had just picked twenty ballots in each bag that had not been marked for the supervisor's race. You know, there's a drop-off as you go down the ballot. People vote for the top of the ticket, and only eighty-five percent of them will vote for the local races at the bottom. You will always find unmarked ballots in the lower-echelon races.

The fact that it was by twenty each was what alerted her suspicion, so we went ahead with it. She won, and her opponent had to pay the costs.

Chall: That's interesting, because so infrequently--

Gatov: Very infrequently! I think we're lucky in California, that we really have a remarkably clean system.

Chall: I suppose that if you weren't too concerned about chicanery in Chicago and in Texas, that the Democratic National Committee wouldn't have thought to do anything about it.

Gatov: Oh heavens, no. [Laughter]

Chall: Does the Democratic National Committee ever think of working with Daley in Chicago, and Texas leaders to clean up some of their election practices?

Gatov: I would think that that would be a matter of state concern only. I've seen no evidence.

Chall: You've never seen any evidence of it?

Gatov: No, not at all. State's rights. [Laughs] [end insert from Tape 13, side 1]

Appointments: Deputy Labor Commissioner; Treasurer of the United States

Chall: Tell me how soon after the election you were appointed by Governor Brown to that position with the state.

Gatov: Oh, I would say within a week.

Chall: I've forgotten the title.

Gatov: Deputy Labor Commissioner.

Chall: Had you been aware that he was thinking about it?

Gatov: I didn't know exactly what appointment he had in mind, but I knew that I was going to get an appointment that carried a salary with it, because at that point I simply had to have work of some kind. I don't know who arranged it. I expect Don Bradley probably did, and Roger. But in any case, within about a week, I turned up in the labor commissioner's office. That was Sigie [Sigmund] Arowitz, who was formerly with the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

He is since dead. He was a delightful human being, just a warm big bear, and a compassionate fellow. He was delighted to see me, because my predecessor had been Andy Hatcher. I don't know whether you remember him. He was Pierre Salinger's press assistant, and ultimately assistant press secretary.

But Andy had been gone for most of the preceding six or eight months, and I said, "I don't want to stir. [Laughs] I just want to go from Kentfield to San Francisco every day, and I don't want to travel. I'll just stay right here, if that's what you want."

Gatov: By the time I left, it was really going very nicely. I was in charge of the internal administrative work, and he was traveling all over the state, because there are eleven offices of the labor commissioner, and he hadn't been able to really get to them. The work that I'd been doing in politics, while it wasn't exactly the same as that, it nevertheless was administrative, definitely! So it wasn't a difficult job, in the sense of the adjustment. The adjustment wasn't particularly vast, once I found out what went on in the labor commissioner's office.

Chall: So you began to work almost immediately.

Gatov: Within five or six days, I would think. I was sworn in by Stanley Mosk, and by the middle of November I was working and enjoying it.

Chall: And by the middle of December you had another appointment?

Gatov: Yes, [laughs] by the middle of December. The telephone rang about seven-thirty one morning and Senator Engle--Clair Engle--was on the other line. His opening comment, I'll never forget was, "How'd you get to know Jack Kennedy so well?"

Well, Clair had not been enthusiastic about Kennedy at any time. I think he had voted for Symington at the convention. His real love was Lyndon Johnson, but he really didn't quite dare to do that. After the nomination Clair said he wanted to be in charge of the Johnson campaign in California, and so okay, he did that. So he never really was anywhere near Kennedy; he just managed to avoid him without creating any ill-will.

So I just laughed when he said that, and he said, "Last night Pat Brown and I went to the house on M Street," (which was then the Kennedy home) and he said, "We had a list of people that we wanted to submit for his consideration for appointments." And Clair said, "He [Kennedy] didn't react very much until we got to your name. Then he jumped up and said, 'That's a hell of a good idea!'" Clair said, "I was impressed! [Laughs] He reacted!" So I said, "What is it that he wants me to do?" I was really just shaking. And he said, "He wants you to come back and be Treasurer of the United States."

Well, I was stunned. I said, "Well, I'll have to think about it." "THINK ABOUT IT?" I said, "I'll have to call you back." So I quivered and shook, and thought about it and thought about it. The more I thought about it, the more I realized that I really did not want to go.

My romance was just getting underway with Al Gatov, and my son was still home and was going to go to college the following year. I really just didn't want to leave. My mental picture of this job was a very

Gatov: social one, lots of teas and luncheons--things that I really don't like. Whatever the difference in salary was, I was sure that it would be more than what I was getting, but that would be more than taken up in clothes and additional expenses.

I didn't say anything to anybody, and called Clair back and told him that I didn't want to take it for personal family reasons. He chewed me out, and then a few days later, "Squire" Behrens of the Chronicle called, and he had heard about it. I'll never get over my feeling of gratitude toward him. He said, "I assume you're going to take it," and I said, "No, Squire, I'm not."

He uttered a few expletives. I wasn't going to discuss why I wasn't going to do it, but I said, "I would greatly appreciate it if you don't say a word about it, because the next person to whom they will offer it needn't know that they weren't first choice." He hadn't looked at it that way, and he said, "All right. I won't do anything with it if it doesn't come over the wire." So I felt vastly relieved.

The next day, I told my boss that if he heard any rumors, to this effect, just disregard them. They weren't true. Within two days, [laughs] the phone rang again, and it was Salinger this time. I was in the office, and he said, "We're going to renew the invitation, and I'm going to put it on the wire this time." He said, "The President-elect will call you at home tonight at seven o'clock your time." So I shook again, and started to cry and went in to Sigie Arowitz, [laughs] and-- "Oh, this terrible thing! What shall I do, what shall I do?"

He said, "Why, you have no choice. You're going to take it." And I called Al, and told him about it, and he said, "That's marvelous!" and I was disgusted with him. [Laughs] I called a few other people, and everybody thought I was crazy. "You have to go! You're going to go."

So I went sobbing home, and just as I walked in the door, the phone rang and it was Kennedy, and you know--charm.

Chall: [Laughs] Crying all the way from the office!

Gatov: Beyond belief! What could I say except, "Oh, thank you. I'm so flattered! That's wonderful!" And he said, "Well, you think it over, and talk it over with your son and send me a telegram tonight. Send me a night letter, so that I can announce it tomorrow morning."

So Al came over and drafted the telegram for me. Then we decided to send one to Palm Beach and one to Washington, because I didn't know which home he was in. The next morning, by five o'clock, I guess, the phone began to ring; it was the press. But meantime, I had called my mother, and daughter, and brothers.

Chall: Your son accepted the idea?

Gatov: He thought it was the best idea imaginable! You know, at seventeen-- they don't think they need to be watched over.

[end Tape 9, side 2]

VII UNITED STATES TREASURER, 1961-1962
(Interview 10, April 14, 1976)
[begin Tape 10, side 1]

Chall: Today we want to start talking about your position as U.S. Treasurer. The last time we met, you were sobbing your way to Washington!
[Laughter]

Gatov: And I did explain why.

Chall: Yes. So you arrived.

Gatov: I arrived just before the snowstorm, and some very dear friends, Tom and Elizabeth Covell had found a delightful house in Washington. They had found me a house in Georgetown, furnished, very near Georgetown University, so all I had to do was move in. It had everything, including breakfast for the next morning.

Chall: What good friends! [sighs]

Gatov: Excellent! And I had my beautiful new mink coat. I'm sure I told you that story.

Chall: No.

Gatov: Didn't I? About my Republican relatives, particularly my two brothers?

Chall: Oh, had they bought it for you?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Brand new?

Gatov: Brand new. We had been arguing all these years about politics. When this happened, they were so excited and stunned that they'd decided that they'd get together to buy me this lovely thing. After all, I had to look proper in Washington! [Laughs]



Elizabeth Gatov
United States Treasurer 1961-1962
(The Washington Post)



Swearing-in Ceremony in the Oval Office
January 30, 1961
left to right: C. Douglas Dillon,
Secretary of the Treasury; Jane R. Gunn
(daughter of Elizabeth Gatov); Elizabeth
Gatov; Anna May Rudel (mother of Elizabeth
Gatov); President Kennedy; Elizabeth J.
Gunn; Shelly E. Gunn.
(White House photograph)

Gatov: My mother arrived from North Carolina, and my daughter and her two children, and her husband, and my three brothers and three sisters-in-law.

Chall: Oh, they all--?

Gatov: They all came down for the inauguration. It was absolutely chaotic, with the snowstorm and so forth. They very wisely decided to watch the whole thing in their motel on television. [Laughs]

I went out and watched with Alice Kent, Roger's wife. It was perishingly cold, just unbelievably cold, but we were all wrapped up and it was bright sunlight. Everything could be heard beautifully. You could see the people; see Earl Warren, and Jack Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson. All of them were up there, but we were sitting quite far away from where it took place, even though we were right in the front of it. It made quite a difference to be in the direct line.

Chall: How did you get there? I understand that it was impossible to drive.

Gatov: It had been impossible, but mercifully I was allotted a Marine and a car, for the duration of those two days, so I was picked up and delivered, which was a tremendous help. It was very very exciting when we went to the inaugural balls the night before. That was very chaotic, but it didn't really matter. We didn't care.

There'd been a California party the night before the inaugural ball for President-elect Kennedy, in one of the hotels where most of our people were staying. About a thousand Californians went to Washington for the inauguration on their own time and money.

So Bart Lytton, who must pop up once in awhile--

Chall: He does, he pops up giving parties.

Gatov: Well, this is what he did, with the most incredible lack of grace, [laughs] he introduced the president-elect and managed to get in the fact that this party was costing him \$20,000. Anyway, then Kennedy went through the crowd, speaking to everybody, he finally got to me, and he was very warm and friendly. He asked if I'd found a place to live yet, and we chatted briefly.

He was, by this time, sophisticated, at ease, and a match for the job. I don't know how else to express it. I think I told you about the whistlestops, when he was quite stiff and withdrawn. By this time, I wouldn't say that he was relaxed, exactly, but he was able to appear to be perfectly natural and spontaneous. He said very pleasant, friendly, personal kinds of things to people, which was a gift that he never lost. It was not, I don't think, a natural trait of his.

Appointment Confirmed

Gatov: Anyhow, what with snowstorms and other such things, I did manage to get through the necessary prerequisites, which were to meet the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, which was Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia. Senator Clair Engle took me and introduced me. We chatted, and Douglas Dillon came in, and the undersecretary, Henry H. Fowler. Joe was his nickname. He was a man from Alexandria, Virginia, a delightful kind of person.

Anyway, we paid a social visit, a courtesy call, and then we were told when we would be called before the Senate Finance Committee. Somebody told me also that I had to prepare a financial statement and give that to the committee, to make sure there was no conflict of interest. In other words, I couldn't own any bank stocks or any government bonds or any things of that nature. I didn't have any, anyway, so there was no problem.

Eventually, came the hearing, and they passed over me very lightly.

Chall: They did indeed.

Gatov: Which gave me a sneaking suspicion that the job wasn't very important! [Laughter] Maybe that's why I got it. I had not realized how much of a ceremonial job it was perceived to be.

Chall: You really hadn't?

Gatov: I wasn't really aware of it. I knew that Georgia Neese Clark had been treasurer, but I never had really talked very much about that. I'd read all these impressive, sort of horrifying, descriptions of the responsibility. [Laughs] I didn't realize that very little, if any of it, was going to fall on me. But those senators knew, and the press knew.

Chall: Did you feel that you were being dealt with rather lightly? Of course in those days, as you point out to me from time to time, and we all should keep it in mind, we had a different perception of women's place in government. The news report, which I have here, indicated that there was a great deal of banter about how attractive you were, and all of that.

Gatov: All of that really sexist kind of stuff was, to me, rather shocking. I wasn't used to it, but if this was the way it was, this was the way it was.

Washington reporter, DORIS FLEESON of the NEW YORK POST, which has a woman publisher, observed: "for women the New Frontiers are the old Frontiers." UNQUOTE

As for qualifications for treasurer, MISS FLEESON added: "Fortunately it needs few....it is pleasant, decently paid and not arduous. The late WILLIAM R. JULIAN, an OHIO manufacturer held it for years and managed to spend more time at BURNINGTREE than even PRESIDENT EISENHOWER," UNQUOTE (that is, presumably playing golf)

THE NEW YORK DAILY NEWS raged: that if the Treasurer of the United States is "a do-nothing-no nothing about it" job, why not do away with it and save \$17,000. a year?

But in California, where Mrs. SMITH is serving as Deputy Assistant Labor Commissioner, (a new appointment from California's GOVERNOR BROWN) Mrs. SMITH told me the bankers and press were taking her Washington appointment, "quite calmly."

THE TREASURER OF THE UNITED STATES is one of the oldest offices. It was created by an Act of Congress in 1789. NELLIE TAYLOR ROSS, the first woman Governor of Wyoming (who served out her husband's unexpired term) actively served almost 20 years as the first woman director of the United States Mint. So, MRS. INDIA EDWARDS, who marshalled the women's vote to elect HARRY TRUMAN was able to persuade him to make GEORGIA NEESE CLARK the first woman treasurer of the United States. Mrs. Clark was also a Democratic national Committee woman, this time from Kansas. With this difference, GEORGIA CLARK was a cracker barrel banker.

Now, she is said to own her home town bank and most of her home town.

Excerpts from radio broadcast script of Wilma Soss, Pocket Book News, given 25 December 1960 on NBC. Full text in Gatov papers in The Bancroft Library.

securities deposited, collateral and otherwise." UNQUOTE
from the U. S. Government Organization Manual of 1960-61.

So, it seems that the Treasurer of the United States has a little something to do besides signing the currency.

No wonder LIBBY SMITH told me she was so "stunned" by her appointment that when all the newsmen were asking questions and there was some joshing about how surprised her daughter must be, someone suggested that probably the new woman Treasurer couldn't even balance her own check book, an idle jest that went unchallenged. BOTH LIBBY SMITH and her very nice, intelligent daughter, Mrs. Gunn tell me that MRS. GUNN was "thrilled" with her mother's appointment and never made any such statement. In fact, this caused her daughter so much publicity and grief, she said she now wishes there was some way "to divorce herself from her family".

This may be a Christmas gift to President-Elect KENNEDY and the Treasury Department.

LIBBY RUDEL SMITH cannot only balance her own check book but she can also read a financial report. She is a stockholder in many companies. She was one of four directors for ten years in her father's company, the RUDEL MACHINE COMPANY in Canada. The machine tool company was sold to CANADIAN FAIRBANKS MORSE last summer, whose president now wants to become a Canadian citizen. MRS. SMITH, Canadian born of American parents, made a fateful choice when at the age of 21 she chose to become an American citizen. One of her brothers chose to be a Canadian. And this is not the first time she has become a treasurer. She served as a treasurer of community organizations, including childrens and hospital auxiliaries.

**NOMINATIONS OF MRS. ELIZABETH R. SMITH, TO BE
TREASURER OF THE UNITED STATES; HENRY H.
FOWLER, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF TREASURY;
ROBERT V. ROOSA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF
TREASURY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS; AND JOHN S.
GLEASON, JR., TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF VET-
ERANS' AFFAIRS**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1961

**U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,
*Washington, D.C.***

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:20 a.m., in room 2221, New Senate Office Building, Senator Harry Flood Byrd (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Byrd, Kerr, Long, Smathers, Douglas, Gore, McCarthy, Hartke, Fulbright, Williams, Carlson, Bennett, Butler, and Morton.

Also present: Senator Engle, of California; Senator Dirksen, of Illinois; Senators Javits and Keating, of New York; and Theodore F. T. Crolius, administrative assistant to Senators Javits.

Elizabeth B. Springer, chief clerk.

The CHAIRMAN. The meeting will come to order.

The Chair recognizes Senator Clair Engle, who will introduce Mrs. Elizabeth R. Smith, of California, who has been nominated to be Treasurer of the United States.

Senator ENGLE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

I am honored this morning to introduce Mrs. Elizabeth Rudel Smith, of Kentfield, Calif., who has been nominated to be U.S. Treasurer by President Kennedy.

This is a double pleasure, Mr. Chairman, because Mrs. Smith is a longtime personal friend and a public servant who is held in the highest regard in her home State of California and elsewhere.

Mrs. Smith has just resigned her post of assistant labor commissioner for the State of California to which she was recently appointed by Governor Brown. She has been a member of the Governor's business advisory committee.

She served as Democratic National Committeewoman from California since 1956.

Her experience in government affairs began when she interned with Coro Foundations of San Francisco, a nonprofit educational foundation which specializes in students who are interested in government.

2

NOMINATIONS

Later she served as a member of the staff of that foundation.

In the business world she has been equally active as a director of the Rudel Machinery Co., Ltd., of Montreal, Canada, until September of 1960.

She served as the founder of the Ross Valley Women's Shop, in Kentfield, Calif., and in other capacities.

From 1948 to 1950 she was the feature editor and reporter of the San Rafael Independent Journal, a daily newspaper.

At the same time, Mrs. Smith has found time to be active in civic work of various kinds and serves, for example, as a director of the San Francisco Junior League, and vice president of the county Red Cross chapter in her home community.

Born in Canada of American parents, she attended schools in Montreal and New York; attended Smith College, and graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.A. degree in Far Eastern civilizations.

Mr. Chairman, I take great pleasure in introducing Mrs. Smith, and I hope that she will have a favorable consideration of this committee.

Thank you for your kindness.

(The biographical sketch of Mrs. Smith follows:)

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA, ELIZABETH RUDEL SMITH

Born Montreal, Canada, 1911, of American parents, Clarence M. and Mary May Rudel.

Primary education in private schools in Montreal. Secondary education at the Masters School, Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. Attended Smith College 2½ years, transferred to University of Michigan, where received A.B. degree in Far Eastern civilizations. Internship in public affairs, Coro Foundations, San Francisco.

CIVIC

Treasurer, Presbyterian Orphanage, San Anselmo, Calif.; vice president, Red Cross chapter, Marin County; member, board of directors, San Francisco Junior League; and publicity chairman, school bond elections, Marin County.

BUSINESS

Director, Rudel Machinery Co., Ltd., Montreal, Canada, until September 1960; founder, Ross Valley Shop (women's clothes), Kentfield, Calif. (sold 1947); appointed assistant labor commissioner, State of California, December 1960 (resigned January 13, 1961); staff member, Coro Foundation, 1952-53; invented and patented a fire starter (sold 1959); reporter and feature editor, San Rafael Independent Journal (daily), 1948-50.

POLITICAL

(Between 1950 and 1961)

California, national committeewoman, Democratic, 1956; chairman, Marin County Democratic Central Committee; director, California Democratic Council; cochairman, coordinator, or northern California manager in most statewide Democratic campaigns in California since 1954; member Governor Brown's business advisory committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Smith, I have had the pleasure of two conferences with you in my office, and I personally am very much pleased with your appointment.

Have you any comment or statement to make to the committee?

NOMINATIONS

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STATEMENT OF MRS. ELIZABETH SMITH, NOMINEE TO BE
TREASURER OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. SMITH. I would just like to answer any questions they might have, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I think you filed a statement with the committee with respect to any conflict of interests, which I do not imagine could exist.

Mrs. SMITH. Should any occur to you, sir, I would be very happy to dispose of whatever holding that might be.

The CHAIRMAN. I will ask that the statement of your holdings be put into the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Any questions?

Senator DOUGLAS. I will merely say this—excuse me, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Douglas.

Senator DOUGLAS. I merely say this, Mr. Chairman, I understand Mrs. Smith has a very fine signature, and I think we all hope to see her signature many times.

The CHAIRMAN. Not only that, she has a very fine face, too. It will look good on the dollar bill. [Laughter.]

Senator GORE. Did you say there were two conferences in your office?

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NOMINATIONS

The CHAIRMAN. I tried to get a third, but I could not get any excuse for it.

Senator KERR. I would like to ask a question off the record.
(Off the record discussion.)

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mrs. Smith.

Senator ENGLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gatov: What I was aware of, was that it was viewed, at that time, as being the top women's appointment, so I was flattered about that. The job was something else again. I did try, while I was there, to get it upgraded or abolished.

Chall: Did you?

Gatov: Yes, in conversations that I had with Secretary Dillon. Because I pointed out to him several times, and he seemed to agree, that for a woman to get the appointment, she had to be a relatively high-powered individual, with some competence in something, or she wouldn't have been offered it in the first place. To then expect her to do a ceremonial job, I thought was rather dull, frankly.

It wasn't boring for me, because of a number of things. One was that the administration had made it plain that they wanted me to travel a lot. They were very strict about travel expenses. I had to be paid for by whoever my invitee was. There were very few official things that I needed to travel for. There were some. In that case, the government paid, but most of the speeches that I made were to groups some place who appeared to understand that they had to pay the treasurer's travel expenses.

Chall: Did they also pay you an honorarium, in addition?

Gatov: No. Only once, I was paid \$150 for something or other, appearing on a television show. I turned that over to some charity. I forget what it was. We were not allowed to take anything. This came down as a Kennedy rule. You knew--you were to travel tourist, and you didn't take honorariums, and you didn't write for pay about anything you're doing. You don't make money off the government, in other words! [Laughs]

Chall: Well, you certainly did travel a great deal. Continually, it looked like.

Gatov: Well, it was, just about, but it was carefully planned, [laughs] because if you notice, most of the trips--I don't have an itinerary here--but most of the trips were arranged so that I could get within easy flying distance of San Francisco. That part of the trip I would pay for myself. Then I paid my way back to say, Montana, where I'd have another speaking engagement. I'd make these round trips all over the country, [laughs] always managing to come home to California about every six weeks.

My son was here until September. In September, he left to go to Princeton, and I rented the house. I also wanted to see Al, so I managed these round trips with great care.

Chall: That was nice, every six weeks.

Gatov: The White House seemed to be very pleased with the amount of press I got. I don't know why I got so much, but apparently it was an astonishing amount. I think I've got a good sample in the papers you have seen.

Chall: Yes, when I was looking at it there was some article that mentioned you had become a favorite of the press. I was curious about how you took all this, because generally speaking, you didn't like to make speeches, but of course now you had to. The other thing is that, before this appointment, you didn't get--probably because you didn't want it--a great deal of publicity. Prior to this, you weren't always being watched by the press and having almost everything you said, or what somebody who knew you said about you, reported. [Laughs] I noticed rumors were flying, and you were countering rumors.

Gatov: Well, I viewed it as my job as part of the Democratic structure, here in California, to keep anything unfavorable out of the press. I did not regard it as the personal playground, nor did I regard myself as a source. If they called and asked me questions about something, when it seemed to be getting to be rather a sticky situation--which it did occasionally--then I'd refer them to somebody else. Like Roger, or Don Bradley, or the governor, or whoever it seemed to me should appropriately answer it.

Chall: That would be in connection with the Democratic party?

Gatov: Well, for instance, in connection with the delegate solicitation work that I was doing. I may have told you this. Prior to the convention of 1960--this was, I think, the reason that I was appointed to treasurer-- Jess Unruh and I were asked by Larry O'Brien to try to bring delegates to Kennedy.

Chall: Oh, in '60.

Gatov: In '60, and I think it was this that I got brownie points for, from O'Brien, who passed them on. But I would never have told the press what I told him, that so-and-so, and so-and-so, and so-and-so are switching, even though the press knew I was for Kennedy and working for him and so forth. If I got questioned about that, I'd say, "Well, I suggest you talk to Governor Brown." I didn't see my role as that of a mouthpiece.

I think the press liked me because I used to work on a newspaper. That was always part of my biographical sketch. Apparently there just aren't too many people around in those appointive positions who worked on a paper, so that's the only way I can account for it, because I think it was rather staggering.

Chall: Well, you may have been more interesting than the preceding treasurers. You don't think it had anything to do with the fact that you were handsome and articulate.

Gatov: It may have, but I don't really think so, because it came from women reporters as much as men reporters. I think the other factor was that I was part of the exciting Kennedy administration in its early days. It's hard to remember now how electric that was, and how stimulated people were by it.

The Aura of the Kennedy Administration

Chall: Were you in any way a part of it, aside from your position? Did you feel a part of the Kennedy group, welcomed into it?

Gatov: Yes, in many ways and no in some ways. I was not part of the "Robert Kennedy throwing somebody in the swimming pool" group, but I did become very close friends with a number of other appointees, who lived in different parts of Washington. We would all give informal dinner parties, and invite each other. There was no press or protocol involved. It was just a group of people who were interested in the administration.

I remember we frankly exchanged gossip when it was just absolutely delightful! [Laughs]

Chall: Who were some of these people?

Gatov: I'm trying to think. Dick Goodwin was one, who has since become a quite prolific writer. Most of the other names escape me altogether now. There was the man who was the head of the Federal Aviation Administration--Najeeb Haleby. The man from here--the atomic energy man. I'm very bad with names. You know who I mean.

Chall: The former chancellor [Glenn Seaborg].

Gatov: He was my escort a number of times, because he was alone the first five or six months, and he was miserable! Absolutely miserable! Apparently he had a houseful of children, and well, he just could barely stand it! Anyway, he would take me quite often to these events. I had no romantic interests, because I already had that.

But the thing that was so pleasant was as I say, these small informal groups. Then often when Californians would come to town, which was very often, they would assemble a group, and we would have dinner and talk. We trusted each other.

Chall: And was the aura of the Kennedy administration--did it seem to be as exciting and important to all of you who were inside of it as it was made to seem to those on the outside reading about it?

On the Job as Treasurer

Gatov: Yes. We were well aware that there was a new energy in Washington. You could even see it, because as I think I mentioned earlier, I'd been in Washington a number of times during the Eisenhower era, when I was on the national committee originally. Everything was sort of closed up, and when it became dark, the lights would go out in the buildings.

In the Kennedy days, especially in the first six months, the buildings seemed to be inhabited twenty-four hours a day. Things were going on, and people were trying, not by any particular signal, but they just realized that there was an awful lot to be done and a very short time in which to do it.

They were enthusiastic, including myself. I was very impatient with the kind of language that was used in inter-office memos, for instance.

An Experience Cutting Through Red Tape

Gatov: One of the things that I did took some doing to try to get it accomplished. In May of my first year, someone telephoned to me in the early afternoon from the Liberty Loan building (which was a building on the other side of the ellipse on the other side of the Washington Monument, from the main Treasury building) to say that several people--mostly women--in the currency redemption section, as I recall, were becoming ill with the heat. There was a very early heat wave, which I wasn't even aware of sitting in my lovely air-conditioned place. But apparently, it became very hot.

She wanted to know if they could go home, and I said, "Yes, by all means." Then I went over there the next day. I'd been over there to see it during my first days in office, so I went over again, saw the nurse in the building and asked her about the history of this heat problem--if this happened often. I hadn't spent a summer in Washington yet, [laughs] and I didn't realize they didn't have air-conditioning in the building.

Gatov: She told me that for nineteen years they'd been turned down for air-conditioning, because the General Services Administration told them the building was going to be torn down within a year. Well, I thought this was rather inadequate, so I asked her questions about who had to do this, who has to okay it.

I started in the properly formal way of writing a letter, first to somebody in the Treasury, and then sending a copy of it to the man who was head of the General Services Administration, a man named Bernard Boutin, who had been on the national committee from Vermont. I was getting this terrible government gobbledegook back, in effect saying No in fifteen different ways.

I got madder and madder about this, because I thought it was stupid. Why should there be discrimination among people who work for the treasurer's office? Some of them had beautiful buildings, and these people had just the crumbs.

I'd finally gotten my car, and I had a driver during the day, which was a great part of the whole thing! [Laughs] I provided the car and he did the driving, which was lovely. He took me on over there to the General Services Administration. I called to say I was coming, but I didn't ask if Boutin could see me. He just knew I was coming, and I marched in.

I said that if he didn't promise me that he would put portable air-conditioners in those windows within the next two weeks, I was going to call the press and tell them about this kind of thing that had been going on for nineteen years. Apparently, this slow-moving administration couldn't quite get around to doing anything.

I really was just livid and he knew it. Within three days I had a letter saying that they were sending out for bids. At first, you see, they wouldn't put the air-conditioning in because the building was too old. Then they wouldn't put it in because it would be too much of an investment in an old building that was going to be torn down. That's when I said, "The portable ones--you know, you can always sell them for something."

So to this day, every time I go to Washington, I look, and they're still there in that same building, [laughs] looking like warts on the side of an elephant! [Laughs] I got a great feeling of satisfaction, because those people would no longer have to go through that hot sweltering summer.

Chall: What you did, in so many ways, is all in your clippings. But some other aspects of your life in Washington are not there. I wanted to discuss with you your ability to get very much done in the office. First of all, it was not really a job, in a sense.

Gatov: It was an administrative job only, and it was a service bureau. You know, we didn't have to make any policy about anything.

Chall: Whatever administration you had to do, and whatever was expected of you in that position--that's what I'd like to have you talk about. If it was an administrative job, what were you supposed to do as the administrator, or was this all done by the civil servants, who were used to seeing various women come and go over the years? Georgia Neese Clark, I guess, stayed quite a number of years, but it's generally a four-year term, and lately it hasn't even been that long.

Did anybody expect you to do anything except go around the country and speak?

Gatov: My deputy was named Bill Howell, and he was a very nervous person who had been deputy for all the women treasurers--in a sense this was nothing new to him. He saw as his job that of, one, getting me familiar with the vocabulary of the Treasury, so that I'd know what the words meant, and second, presenting our budget to the subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee of the House.

He worked on me, and I was eager to learn, naturally. For all I knew, this was really just the beginning. I quickly memorized whose faces were on the portraits of the bills, which is a question that the press always likes to ask. He was fully aware of what I was going to be exposed to, as soon as I stuck my nose out of the door. He was determined to have me ready for it, and he did.

He quickly took me around to the eleven different sections of our office. I met all the staff people, and I found out what they did, and I found out why we got into the computer business, the pioneering plans working with various computer manufacturers. I saw the computers work, saw the incredible things they did, accounting for all the government checks--six per second.

He got me ready, so to speak. After that, I found out that I was supposed to sell savings bonds. Not sell savings bonds, but promote savings bonds. This was another task, the pro forma part of the position. A duller thing you can hardly imagine!

Encourages Both Parties

Treasurer Backs Women In Politics

By JERRY KLEIN
Staff Writer

The woman with the most valuable signature in the world, Mrs. Elizabeth Rudel Smith, treasurer of the United States, spoke Thursday evening on "The Need for Business Men and Women in Politics" following the dinner meeting of the Peoria Chapter, National Association of Accountants, at the Hotel Pere Marquette.

More and more men and women today are getting involved in politics, she said. This, she said, "is what more must go on doing in greater numbers in both parties if we are to continue as an unfettered nation of people with the sense, the courage and the stamina to handle our own affairs and lead the free world."

The attractive grandmother of two, exhibiting a winning personality and a warm smile, quoted President Kennedy in his address to the UN when he said "Peace is a matter of politics and people."

"Where it is a fact that they (a mysterious political group) govern with obscure authority and dubious motive we are being badly governed. Where we as citizens stand up to be counted, where we don't mind running the risk of seeming to be naive, asking possibly foolish questions, we are making solid contributions to being better governed. No government or nation is sturdy or competent if it lacks the honest patriotism of its people."

Patriotism, she explained, does not only mean voting regularly, displaying the flag or becoming involved in arguments. "It consists in the willingness, the urgent wish to do something, to contribute something, to give, make sacrifices, to look for and find ways in which we can serve our country."

Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon this fall.

"Most people seem to think it's a good idea," she said. "But some have come up with comments such as 'why don't you just redecorate your office?'"

People who have traveled in other countries realize that different colors for different denominations would be a help, she said. As yet, there has been no recommendation on the colors to be used, although she said if the plan were adopted, the dollar bill would probably remain green.

She said the dollar is stable at present. "There has been much less concern over inflation than we usually have when we are going into a period of prosperity," she noted.

A FORMER assistant labor commissioner in California, director of the Rudel Machinery Co. Ltd. in Montreal, founder of a dress shop, and one-time reporter and



She Signs the Bills

Treasurer of the United States, Mrs. Elizabeth Rudel Smith, who spoke before a special meeting of the Peoria Chapter, National Association of Accountants, Thursday night, looks over some of her "paper-work," as Harvey Masimore, chairman of the dinner, left, and Russell I. Johnson, chapter president look on.

feature editor, Mrs. Smith also invented and patented a fire starter. being manufactured by a firm near Chicago, is a wood-fiber

"You simply can't find kindling product coated with wax. I got tired of using paint thinner to help start the fireplace." said. "The fire starter, which is

SHE SAID THAT Berlin, Laos, Cuba and Africa are as vital to us today as Concord and Lexington were nearly two centuries ago. Even if we could return to a time when Europe was at least five days away and our best defense was coastal artillery, "we would still be obligated to face the fact that the people of this world have become sharply divided by two ideas. One of these started in the reading rooms of the British Museum with a nearsighted radical, Karl Marx. The other has been preached a longer time and has its roots in our Judeo-Christian traditions."

Harking back to participation in politics, she said: "Representative government such as ours is utterly dependent upon the people who make themselves available to it. If you walk away someone possibly less able will take the spot you might have filled."

POLITICAL officials, she said, can be only as successful as we make it possible for them to be. "We can never forget that what we do here makes what they do either a transparent lie or a demonstrable truth. We have no place to hide from the skeptical scrutiny of those we are trying to persuade. They tune us in, very loud and clear, when we are caught in a hypocritical 'do as I say, not as I do' situation."

She concluded quoting from President Kennedy's inaugural: "In your hands my fellow citizens, more than in mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course."

At an informal press conference before the dinner, she said there has been no decision yet on her proposal for different colors for different denominations of paper money. She said she hopes to have a chance to discuss it with

Redecorating the Office

Gatov: My predecessor, Ivy Baker Priest, had a fondness for maroon and velvet, rather heavy kinds of curtains and rugs, and upholstery and stuff. Of course I didn't think I could do anything about it, I just looked at it and thought, "Oh, my."

One day, Mr. Howell came in and said, "You know, you can redecorate this office any time that you want." I said, "Well, it's hardly necessary." He kept urging me. [Laughs]

Chall: Gotta give the woman something to do!! [Laughter]

Gatov: So I redecorated it in green and gold.

Chall: I did see some reference to a beautifully-decorated office, and I wasn't sure who had done it. Oh, yes--I don't think this is yours. This is in 1971, when the office was, quote, "pale-pink walls, lush rose carpeting, velvety silver couches, and dainty satin-covered chairs."

Gatov: Dear me! [Laughs]

Chall: You didn't do that?

Gatov: I did not do that. My successor, Katherine Granahan did. It sounds like a boudoir approach. I tried to make it a sort of pleasant living room, in a businesslike way. I had a yellow rug and yellow curtains, and yellow-and-green upholstery of some sort.

Then I wrote to somebody in Governor Brown's office and asked if they had any extra California photographs to put on the walls. They arrived, and they were perfectly lovely. I don't know who did them. They weren't Ansel Adams, but they were almost that good. You know--snow scenes of Yosemite and Tahoe, and the coast. It was really very lovely, but I left them behind in another Californian's office who wanted some mementoes of the state.

Personnel Administration

Gatov: Well, I got that message, and so I redecorated. Then I said, "I want a typewriter." "A TYPEWRITER?"

Chall: Indeed. [Laughs]

Gatov: That's just what they said, "Indeed!" I had three secretaries. I didn't have a speechwriter. I didn't have any staff that was supposed to do these things for me. The savings bonds division said they would take care of my savings bond speeches, but I could imagine what they were going to be like. So I said, "I write my own speeches. I do it better through my fingers than I do with a pen or pencil or by dictation."

So reluctantly, a non-electric [laughs] portable typewriter was produced with a table. I was well aware that this was considered demeaning to the office. One of the secretaries that I had was from the White House. She worked in my office for the White House. I had one civil service woman, Barbara Gregory, who came with the office. It was she, who said what I could do and have, and that I was entitled to three.

Well, I had one, who's now working for Alan Cranston, Louise Ringwalt, who had been secretary for the state central committee.

Chall: How did she get to Washington?

Gatov: She'd gone there right after the election, and worked for awhile in Senator Engle's office, and then worked at the White House. She'd had tuberculosis, not too many years prior. Maybe not any years prior. It was fairly close to the time that she went to Washington; she recovered, but she wasn't supposed to do too much, and of course, the frenzy of the White House I'm sure was just beyond belief.

So I called her, and asked her if she'd like to come work for me, because I was sure that mine would be a nice nine-to-five job--no weekends, no evenings, no pressure. And, no excitement! [Laughs] She decided she would, and she did.

The civil service woman, Barbara Gregory, was a lovely person. I just notified the White House that I didn't need my full staff allowance, thinking they'd say, "Good, somebody's economizing." But no! They said, "Hold it open."

Pretty soon I got a call from Andy Hatcher, Pierre Salinger's assistant press secretary--this is really funny--saying that they had someone that they'd like me to interview for the extra spot, and she was from Washington, D.C. So she came over that afternoon. A very high-style-dressed black woman, of about forty, I guess, who seemed to be nervous, but other than that, she seemed to be able to do everything that I asked her about. She could type, she could take dictation, she had a good voice, she could answer the telephone.

Gatov: So I said, "After you work it out with the White House, and can manage to move over here, just let us know." I was leaving on a trip the next morning, and Louise [Ringwalt] called me at home before I departed and said, "I hope you're sitting down."

And she said, "The woman that you interviewed yesterday the Secret Service has discovered is the queen of the Washington underworld, and has had quite unsavory charges of diamond theft and drug convictions." And she said, "I don't think you'd really want her." [Laughter] And I said, "Will you please call Hatcher and tell him what we think of him for doing this?" I was about to leave any second.

Andy was very upset. She'd been working in the White House all this time, [laughs] and apparently nobody cared.

Chall: Who checked her out?

Gatov: Secret Service, which is headquartered in the Treasury.

Chall: Why hadn't they checked her out before this?

Gatov: I can't imagine how she got the necessary credentials to walk in and out of the White House, unless they had her stashed away in some other building someplace. Anyhow, he was very mortified.

The next one that he came up with was his own cousin from Los Angeles, who was a perfectly beautiful woman, a divorcee, two children, I think. She was still in Los Angeles when they asked me to consider her. They sent her bio over to the Secret Service, and they came back the next day and said, "She is a dream! She's just lovely!" They can do a very fast twenty-four hour check. It is pretty impressive.

So she eventually arrived, and that was just marvelous. It was a delight. She was the first black secretary that had ever worked in the Treasury, and she was so good that when we heard about the Treasury internship that was put on for the Treasury by Brookings Institute, we urged her to apply for it. She was a college graduate with a lovely personality.

She applied and was accepted, and went through, came out extremely well, and wound up on the Civil Service Commission. I was so pleased with myself, for that one at least.

Then I devised a pre-retirement program. I found out, on asking questions, that a third of the personnel in our office was really unnecessary. They were all there waiting for someone else to die or be retired. We were actually running a marvelous training program which

Gatov: the private sector then benefitted by if they got restless and left. We trained them, and then if they got bored waiting, they'd just go off to somebody else, with their computer skills and other things.

Chall: Men and women?

Gatov: Men and women. I said, you know, "Why don't you ask them when they are going to retire?" Well, this displayed my ignorance. They made it very plain that you never--this is an inviolable territory--you can't ask this.

The federal government had a fifteen year retirement span. I think it was fifty-five to seventy. It was a fifteen-year period. I felt this was absurd to carry so many extra people, so I dreamed up a pre-retirement course.

Of course, there are specialists in everything under the sun in Washington. We weren't going to pay anybody anything, but we had speakers on post-retirement education, medical care, and second careers: is it wise to leave home and move away if you've been here a long time. And what about when you look for real estate, if you're starting to buy a house somewhere else. What should you be aware of? What kinds of volunteer activities might be of interest to you? Et cetera, et cetera.

We'd have twelve sessions at least, which were joined in by some other offices, too. They'd give them time off to come. It was two hours a week. We kept growing.

Chall: Classes in size?

Gatov: Classes in size. We moved to a larger room. At the very end, the last day, they found on their seats a questionnaire. I asked them all kinds of questions about how the course should be treated, changes that they'd like to see made, what additional subjects, et cetera, et cetera. And at the end, it said, "I plan to retire in one year/ three years/ five years/ ten years/ more years," and signature optional.

They signed, and they checked. Now, there was nothing that you could hold them to. You couldn't say, "Okay, you signed that, so you'd better stay here through the next ten years."

But it certainly gave the first insight that they'd had about many of their staff, as to what their plans were, so that they were able to reduce the number. They wouldn't fire anybody, but they just didn't fill some positions as they came up. There was no backlash from it. There was no criticism. It just kept on going. I don't know if it's still going, but it kept on going through the Johnson administration, I know.

Chall: Can you give me some insight as to why you managed to get that across? Did you have to take this to Douglas Dillon or to Mr. Howell? That sounds almost too innovative.

Gatov: Well, it was an innovative time.

Chall: I see, so you could get away with the innovations.

Gatov: The presidential appointees were not doctrinaire about what you could and couldn't do. When I said, "I think I've got a plan that may indicate when people are planning to retire. I don't know about your shop, but mine has a thirty percent overrun of staff. I'd like to try to do it." "Well, go ahead." They were very encouraging of it, and as I say, several gradually released some of their own people to attend. They asked them if they wanted to attend, and they did.

Promoting the Idea of Colored Money

Chall: So if you could think up something that was useful, you might get away with it. How did you think up the idea of colored money?

Gatov: [Laughs] That provided me with the most interesting things I did. That was a very natural thing for me, because I told you that I grew up in Canada and that one of my brothers lived there, and I used to go see him every year, him and his wife. Of course, there they had the vari-colored money since about 1933.

I thought it was better for identification purposes. I didn't know why the French, and the British, and the Mexicans, and so forth have these rather elaborate color schemes, and the Italians have all the different sizes. It seemed to me that this was a very simple thing to do that would again help just "Joe Blow" handling money.

So I brought it up with Mr. Howell, who was horrified. He told me that somebody had looked into it fifteen years earlier, and it had been rejected. I said, "I want all those files, please." So he brought me all the files. I took them home and read through them to see what they'd been up against then.

Well, it had been rejected by Mr. Henry Holtzclaw, who was still there! So I thought, well, let's just see if I can't build my bridges a little better. So I went to see Mr. Dillon about it, and he thought it was a great idea. He was very encouraging. He said, "I can do it, or I can get a bill introduced in Congress to do it." He said, "Frankly, I would prefer to do it," and said he would talk to the president.

Gatov: The next thing I heard about it was from Fred Dutton. A man named Carlton Skinner from San Francisco was in Washington; he and Dutton and I had dinner together, and Fred made quite a point of saying two things. One was that the White House was just delighted with all the publicity I was getting, and second, that they were very intrigued by my proposal to vary the color of money. So I heard the words. He didn't say "pleased," just "intrigued."

In other words, don't stop, but don't expect anything of us, either.

Chall: You understood that. I don't think I would have been that smart.

Gatov: Oh, yes, you would. You listen to what people say and what they don't say, with a political instinct.

I had assembled a lot of data on cost, which would have been zero. On the dyes--Mr. Holtzclaw had said that nothing but the green dyes would work. Well, the manufacturer of the green dye said that they could make purple, pink, orange, blue--any color, just as resistant to fading as the green was. I got in touch with the Canadian Bureau of Engraving, to see whether they'd had any increase in counterfeiting, and so forth, which was another problem brought up by Mr. Holtzclaw.

No, they had no problems. Mr. Holtzclaw viewed it as an insult to his art, which was in turning out the finest, the most beautifully engraved paper currency in the world.

Chall: Well, I can't understand that, because he could have been just as pleased turning out red and yellow ones as green ones. It was a challenge to him.

Gatov: I suppose because he didn't think of it and he was on record as having opposed it. He couldn't accept it. Anyhow, one evening about 5:30, I guess, the white phone behind me, which connected with the secretary's office, which had never rung before [laughs], rang! It startled me terribly!

Chall: Your secretary?

Gatov: No, the secretary of the Treasury. He had a direct line to my office, and I guess I had one to his. But I'd never used it, and it had never rung. So I picked it up, and it was his press secretary, whose name I forget. He said, "The New York Daily News has word of your idea about vari-colored currency. I think you'd better talk to them."

Women Today

CCCC* WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 1961

Green or Pink, It'd Still Be Money

By CLAIRE LEEDS

ELIZABETH RUDEL SMITH, the new Treasurer of the United States, met the press yesterday wearing a trim "money green" suit, but boosting her case for vari-colored currency.

"We are receiving a lot of mail on the subject," said the handsome brunette Californian, "and the letters favor the plan four to one."

Actually, the idea is not new — it has been studied for thirty years as a means of facilitating change-making.

The matter is in the hands of Treasury Secretary Douglas Dillon, whose approval is all that is needed to put the plan into effect — "and he has co-operated up to now, added Mrs. Smith, flashing a warm smile.

No change is contemplated in the color of the present \$1 bills, but denominations from \$2 bills up ("Yes, we still print them!") would come in varied hues.

What colors? Mrs. Smith insists it's NOT like decorating one's home—"but an esoteric matter that must be left to experts. I'm staying out of that part."

Much has been made of the fact that, as Treasurer of the United States, Elizabeth Rudel Smith's signature will appear on all currency. Actually, her duties seldom involve signing her name—except for autograph fans.

Libby Smith is visiting the Bay area to vacate her Kent Woodlands home, and put her furniture in storage ("California furnishings are completely unsuitable to a Georgetown house). . . and to attend her son, Dan's graduation from Redwood



ELIZABETH R. SMITH
New colors for money

High School. ("He enters Princeton this fall.")

On Sunday, Mrs. Smith, who has retained her post as Democratic National Committeewoman for California, will be honored with California's first lady, Mrs. Edmund G. Brown at a reception being given by Northern California Democratic women at the Roger Kent estate.

Then she'll be off on a speaking and fact-finding tour in conjunction with her newest assignment: sounding out public opinion—especially women's opinion—on the Kennedy administration's plan for sweeping tax reforms.

She said the administration believes that an overhaul of the entire tax structure is long overdue—"not just piecemeal reforms such as spot revisions in luxury taxes, but revision of the entire tax system to equalize the burden on people of various income levels."

What do you think about it? Elizabeth Smith would like to know.

Gatov: I said, "I'm not ready to talk to them," and he said, "Well, Holtzclaw already had, so I think you'd better." He said, "They'll call you in just a minute," and I hung up in a bit of shock. I felt so alone! Because I wasn't ready. The Daily News called, and then the thing became public, and so the fight was on, so to speak.

But I must say it attracted tremendous support, and tremendous interest. I didn't see the New York Times editorial, or the Wall Street Journal one, both very supportive, in the clips I gave you.

Chall: They're referred to. I didn't see them either.

Gatov: They're in there someplace. And Business Week, and Sylvia Porter. What I thought were the responsible, reasonable people thought it was a great idea. And then the mail started. That kept my two secretaries busy for the rest of the time I was there, because it just flooded in.

Chall: Was it mostly favorable?

Gatov: Mostly favorable, but the unfavorable had a curiously interesting flavor.

[end Tape 10, side 1; begin Tape 10, side 2]

Gatov: The thing the opponents who wrote me were afraid of was walking into a bank, cashing a check, and getting it in different colored denominations, which they feared could be seen, and then walking out of the bank, and being hit over the head and having their pocketbook or wallet stolen. Of course, it was just as possible if the bills were all of the same color because the edges would be white, but there was some group or other that was spreading this particular line of objection. I'm not surprised that newspapers pick this up when they get letters to the editor. They see a certain repetition of theme, and they know that there's something organized behind it.

Chall: Did you find out?

Gatov: No. They were frequently elderly--you could tell that by the handwriting--and not very literate, whereas the letters from businesses were encouraging and others who wrote in supporting, saying, "I have a restaurant, and we've lost whatever-it-is because our cashiers are not professionals." The bankers were by-and-large opposed.

Chall: The bankers were opposed?

Gatov: The bankers said that anybody who handles money ought to look at the portraits. I'd never even heard those pictures called "portraits" before, but that's what they call them in the trade--the pictures on

Gatov: the money. You're supposed to look at the portraits and not at the numbers. They thought there was enough distinction. My answer was, Not everybody's sober all the time, first of all, and not all taxicabs are brightly lighted, and not all restaurants are well-lighted, and some peoples' eyesight is failing. What's the matter with it? It's not going to hinder the people who count by looking at the portraits. [Laughs] They can still identify them that way.

Well, their objections were formal rather than substantive. They just weren't going to put themselves behind it. I think they probably thought the whole idea of a woman Treasurer was pretty silly anyway. I did get a number of letters saying, "Why don't you just redecorate your office and leave our money alone," and things about "funny money" and so forth.

But anyway, by the time I left, I had had some more conversations with the secretary, who was increasingly interested and pleased. He said, "You know, you're a Democrat and I'm a Republican, and we both want President Kennedy to be reelected." "Yes? Yes." And he said, "I know what the Republicans would do with this if I order this done before the next election. They'll say things such as, 'All he's done for our money supply is to make it look pretty.' They'd kid him about it, and I don't want that to happen. So I promise you that the first thing I'll do after he's reelected is to order it done."

Well, of course, that never happened.

Chall: That was the end of it.

Gatov: Well, that wasn't the end of it! [Laughs] I'm not through!

Chall: Still writing letters?

Gatov: No, but we may have another Democratic president at some point. There is a new head of the Bureau of Engraving--a much younger-looking man. [Laughs] Anyway, I'm going to go back and try. It can be done by act of Congress. John Lindsay, when he was a member of Congress--I got to know him through that, because he was so interested. He wanted to introduce the bill.

Chall: And Senator Engle, I think I noticed in one of your press releases, was about to do the same.

Gatov: He was very interested in too, but he died.

The Woman's Place in Government

Chall: How was the response to you, as a woman? They anticipated a woman being in that office, but did they expect one who would have ideas, and be willing to carry them out?

Gatov: They didn't say.

Chall: What was their general attitude? Could you feel anything?

Gatov: You mean in the Treasury?

Chall: Yes, in your office.

Gatov: They were very polite to me. I think they were surprised that I took the job so seriously. I didn't find that out until later, when I got around to resigning. Everybody that I talked to, from Dillon on down, and over at the White House, said, "But you don't have to resign! You go on back to California, we'll ship you out all the things you have to sign." I was surprised at that.

I had the feeling that this was such an unimportant thing that really, all I did have to do was officially sign documents. That could be done by mail. And it was done by mail, a lot of it, on my trips and so forth. I'd find these documents arriving, waiting for me. But it just wasn't my idea of how--I didn't want to have to explain what I was doing in California while I was on the federal payroll in Washington.

So unfortunately, as time has gone on, they've taken more and more away from the Treasurer's office. So what they do now, I have no idea.

Chall: I was wondering what your general feeling about the work was, with respect to how you carried it out. When you had been in California all those years, working so closely with Roger Kent, Don Bradley and a few other people, in the office here, your relationships with these men and the women you came into contact with were informal, understanding, and trusting. You didn't stand alone.

Gatov: No.

Chall: You made decisions, or somebody else may have them and you would carry them out. It was highly cooperative. Whereas when you went to Washington, you were really on your own, in a sense. If you had an idea and wanted to carry it out, you had to do it on your own. You might even have to battle for it, as with the money and also the air-conditioning, and to meet the press on your own if it was required. Did this give you a feeling that you could work on your own, or might want to? Did it give you a different feeling about your own abilities?

Gatov: It did, I think, increase my confidence about my own abilities, but there were people there that I could talk to. One of them was Joe Fowler who was the undersecretary, who became secretary eventually. He was a wonderfully warm, understanding man with quite a political background himself as a volunteer.

I would go talk to him about things. Katie Louchheim was there, who was a very close friend of mine at the time, and Esther Peterson, whom I knew quite well. And Margaret Price, who was the vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee, was a very good friend of mine. Those are just a few of the people with whom I've been politically associated over the years.

Of course, I did do a lot of politics, because I had remained on the national committee, and people who wanted jobs fairly often came in to see me and talk to me about them. I would try to open doors for them by setting up appointments. I didn't find the days that I spent there long. I had plenty to do, but it wasn't terribly exciting.

However, the White House, when I told them I was going to resign, did offer me other jobs. "I can understand why you're bored with this, we didn't realize what a 'turkey' it was." [Laughs] Those were their terms. But I wanted to come home.

Chall: When you did come home, and went back to work in the political sphere here, it didn't change your feeling about what you could do? You didn't become more assertive? I was wondering whether as a result of this experience, you became perhaps more assertive in your activities in politics. Had you changed your role?

Gatov: I never thought that was the way to get things done. Politically, my method was to try to--not necessarily to be the person who had the bright idea. If you could plant it in somebody else's head, so much the better. It was their idea, and you could help them--a role I liked. But I really never have felt that by yourself you get anywhere politically, anyway. You're either too far out in front, so there's nobody behind you, or you're just a lonely voice in the wilderness.

I think you have to move with a certain consensus in order to make any progress. This is what I was trying to do with the colored money. It broke in public before I wanted it to. [Laughs] Or I would have gotten Mr. Holtzclaw for sure!

Chall: I think it's Esther Peterson, if I remember something that I read quite some time ago about her, who said that if she ever had a good idea, she would always give it to a man first to introduce it.

Gatov: Yes. This is why I first talked to the secretary about it. I felt it was his business. He preferred to have me keep it. So I wasn't doing anything on my own, really. I knew that I had his backing, and I knew that I had others' backing. Presumably some sort of interest in the White House.

Chall: Well, it was considered in the press as your idea, and that's only right.

Gatov: That's the way they wanted it, so if it flubbed, it was my fault.
[Laughs]

Chall: Some silly woman with silly money in mind?

Gatov: Well, I could understand that, you know, the trial balloon is a very old technique. I was floating the balloon.

Chall: Before we leave Washington, I wanted to ask you--

Gatov: You want me to say something about the social life?

Chall: Yes. I wanted to ask about the social life, and I also wanted to ask you about your statement that the Kennedy Administration has been rather unjustifiably criticized for not appointing more women to key positions. I have found the names of only two other women--that doesn't mean that there weren't any others--in key positions.

Gatov: There were fourteen altogether. I don't know how key, but they were presidential appointments.

Chall: I see; that was more than just Esther Peterson and Katie Louchheim.

Gatov: Margaret Price was the one who came up with that figure.

Chall: Margaret Price was the--

Gatov: Vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

Chall: In charge of the women's divisions?

Gatov: Yes. I was having lunch with her one day, because all of us had to talk about it. So I got the figure.

Chall: Esther Peterson deserves the credit for the Commission on The Status of Women, established by Kennedy according to one writer on the history of the women's movement, Jo Freeman.*

*Jo Freeman, The Politics of Women's Liberation (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1975).

Gatov: She does! She had Eleanor Roosevelt as the head of it, but Esther was the one who did the work, and laid the groundwork, and got it done.

Chall: What else can you tell me about the women? Is there anything else to say?

Gatov: Well, something I bring up in a number of speeches--I think probably in some of the ones that I brought you. I think it's true, incidentally, today, what I said then, even though we don't like to admit it.

It's very difficult to find a woman who is free to move to Sacramento or to Washington for full-time political office. It means that they have to be either single or married to somebody who's a writer, or a musician, or something that has a portable skill, or have no family responsibilities at all. This is what turned out to be the case, or else they already lived in Washington, which was convenient for someone like Katie or Esther, who were there. Margaret Price was there.

I haven't noticed any great surge in women running for these full-time legislative jobs. Local office is tailor-made, and there are six running in two supervisorial districts in Marin County right now. I've long felt that these avenues they really ought to explore a lot more than they have.

But to criticize the men for keeping out the women from elective office is, to me, a lot of bunk. If you look through the roster of state legislatures, in certain parts of the South and some parts of New England, they meet for six weeks every two years, or something like that--a very brief period. Even Texas only meets for six months every two years. This is a manageable kind of thing.

But a year-in, year-out office I don't think is practical--most women simply don't want to make the choice.

Women in civil service really were not given much consideration. I think they were kept to the low-pay, low-grade jobs to a great extent. There were a few exceptions.

Chall: Why was that? Were women not qualified for higher grade positions?

Gatov: Yes, but such things as veteran's preference, and educational background were against them. But Frances Knight has been in charge of the passport division for the State Department since I can remember.

Washington Social Life and Political Life

Chall: Now what about your social life in Washington?

Gatov: Well, it was as busy as you cared to have it. I quickly discovered [laughs] that it really was a white-glove, very protocol-conscious kind of thing, except for (as I mentioned earlier) these nice little dinners that we used to have among ourselves.

Going to embassy parties and this sort of thing to me was an insufferable bore. You met the most fascinating people and they wouldn't say a word. They'd talk about the weather, or anything else than what they were really doing. It was just a frothy kind of thing--very elegant, marvelous food, marvelous service, and dull.

The only thing that was interesting to me about it was that you did meet people, and sometimes then you'd have an opportunity to see them under another set of circumstances, in a much more relaxed fashion. Then you could open up, or try to open them up.

But oh dear! The women leave after dinner--leave the men with their cigars and brandy. The best thing about those parties was that they ended early. The senior officer present, the ranking guest, was the one who had to leave first. After they left--he left--then everybody else could leave. For instance, if there was a senator there, you couldn't leave before the senator left, if he was the top person.

There's a green book, which I have, that tells you what the ranking of everybody is, where you fit. I was some place between a congressman and a senator. [Laughs] I suppose it has to be that way, but I found it very dull. So I didn't do much of it, after awhile.

Chall: But you were generally invited to all major functions of that kind?

Gatov: Yes, I was, and if it was something a lot of the Kennedy people would be at, I went--you know, with other people like myself. I also went to a lot of things that the Johnsons put on, just because I really was kind of fed up with the abusive treatment that they got from the Kennedy troops, who had no use for them.

It was becoming so evident that I decided that anything they invited me to, I would go to.

Chall: What kinds of things?

Gatov: Oh, you know--luncheons, receptions and things like that. I met Indira Gandhi at one of them. They were delightful--as unstuffy as those things could be.

Chall: The Johnson affairs were informal?

Gatov: Much less formal. When they were in the White House, too.

Chall: What kind of opinion did you form of President Johnson? He was then the vice-president, of course.

Gatov: Well, he had an ego as big as all outdoors, and was suffering great pain from the intended and unintended barbs. That was pretty well known. I don't think President Kennedy was involved in this, but an awful lot of people on the White House staff were very unpleasant to them. I thought it was silly, so I used to go. I thought somebody from the administration had better be at these things, if for nothing else than to stop the press from saying, "As usual, there was no Kennedy person there. They really are boycotting LBJ and Lady Bird." It was a simple little thing, not very hard to do, if I was in town.

Chall: Did Johnson realize this?

Gatov: He was a very smart man. He never said anything.

Resignation and Return to California

Chall: Well, you came back.

Gatov: With my lifetime supply of white gloves! [Laughter]

Chall: Do you still look at them in a drawer from time to time?

Gatov: Getting yellower and yellower. I've given away a lot of them. I think it was the last of the formal administrations. I don't know, maybe the Nixon one got elegant. I suppose they did.

Chall: What else did you bring back with you? Good memories?

Gatov: Good memories and the recognition that I really had had a remarkable experience. It was a remarkable experience that I was very grateful to have had, [laughs] now that it was over.

Everybody was really wonderful to me, from the president on down. They gave me all sorts of little awards, and ceremonies, and things, that were very nice to have.

Mrs. Smith Expected To Quit as Treasurer

By MARY McCORRY

Star Staff Writer

LOS ANGELES, Calif., Nov. 20.—The New Frontier is about to receive its first letter of resignation from a high-level appointee.

Mrs. Elizabeth R. Smith of California, one of the few women appointed by the Kennedy administration, has told friends here that she is about to give up her \$17,000-a-year job as Treasurer of the United States to come back to California.

Mrs. Smith, who is here on a speaking tour, would not discuss the matter, saying only, "Nothing has been worked out."

But her friends say she will stay on in Washington only until the budget of her office has been sent to Congress, in late January.

She will come back here to work in the campaign of Gov. Edmund G. Brown, who faces a tough fight for re-election against former Vice President Nixon.

Her presence is urgently needed, they say, as California



ELIZABETH R. SMITH

—AP Photo

Democrats are in considerable disarray.

Mrs. Smith, the handsome national committeewoman from California, is on speaking terms with all the people who are

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presently not speaking to each other and who must somehow be brought together to work shoulder to shoulder in the coming struggle.

Gov. Brown's plight apparently was the decisive factor in her decision to come home. But even before, Mrs. Smith was exhibiting signs of restlessness in her high Federal post, whose best-known function is that of signing money.

She was one of the few imports who seemed curiously immune to the Capital's disease, Potomac fever, an affliction which leaves the victim with a trembling horror of returning to the provinces.

Mrs. Smith, whose home is in Kenfield, seemed to her friends lonesome for Western informality, finding Georgetown gardens rather restrained in comparison with the wide open spaces of the Golden State. Mrs. Smith is divorced and apparently found, as did legions of government girls who preceded her, that Washington society is not eared to the unattached woman.

She also missed the alarms and excursions of State politics, in which she has been involved since 1948. Her predecessors as Treasurer were wont to travel the country speaking on civic duty to nonpartisan groups. Mrs. Smith had chosen for her subject the importance of citizen participation, clearly not a satisfying theme for one accustomed to taking the platform to urge Democrats to get out and fight.

Her friends point out that

her talents were not conspicuously employed by the Treasury Department, that she was not included in delegations sent to the International Monetary Conference in Vienna or the conference on the Alliance for Progress in Punta del Este, Uruguay.

Mrs. Smith, who is widely acquainted in every level of California politics, was one of the earliest members of the California delegation to indicate her support for President Kennedy in the pre-primary maneuverings. She was the first woman to be appointed by the New Frontier.

California Democrats make no secret of their anxiety to redeem Mrs. Smith, as well as other hostages to the administration.

They say now is the time for her to come to the aid of the party. They also are agitating for the return of Frederick G. Dutton, secretary of the Cabinet, who they say is much more urgently needed here as chief aide to the disorganized Governor. They argue that a Brown victory here could be essential to Mr. Kennedy in the 1964 campaign.

Mrs. Smith's resignation doubtless will intensify the debate over the position of women in the Kennedy administration, which has not yet been labeled anti-woman-in-high office, but which has not been pro, either.

When President Kennedy was asked at a recent press conference if he felt he had fulfilled his campaign promises toward the gentler sex, he replied jestingly, "Well, I'm sure we're not doing enough," with which women party workers agree.

Gatov: I realized two things. One was that--and I guess there still is a feeling in Washington--that everything happens in Washington, which I've never bought, having been so involved out here. I think things begin elsewhere--they end up in Washington. But they usually, if they're going to have any validity, have to have their genesis someplace else. I was not sympathetic to this isolationist view that if it doesn't happen in Washington, it didn't happen.

Chall: It's like the New Yorker's view of the rest of the country? Did you remember seeing that map, years ago?

Gatov: I don't recall.

Chall: "The New Yorker's Map of the United States." [Laughs]

Gatov: That must be wonderful.

Chall: New York City's map.

Gatov: So I was just terribly happy to get back. We made plans for getting married, and I announced our engagement. We were remodeling the house and building a swimming pool. It was a very busy time.

Chall: All of this was just in the rumor stage, practically, until you did finally announce--

Gatov: It was the fifteenth of April.

Edmund Brown Reelection Campaign, 1962

Chall: --and you came back ostensibly to help Pat Brown in his reelection campaign.

Gatov: Yes. My reason for resigning was that I felt so strongly about the Pat Brown campaign and the necessity of reelecting him. I didn't feel I had the right to involve the administration in it, which would automatically happen if I kept my office.

Chall: In addition to being busy getting yourself ready for your marriage, you did help the Brown campaign?

Gatov: Indeed I did.

Chall: And it wasn't an easy campaign, of course.

Gatov: We weren't sure that we were going to win. We were very much afraid of Richard Nixon. After all, he'd carried the state against Kennedy. People like myself, at any rate, thought that Kennedy was probably a more attractive candidate than Pat, so we were very apprehensive.

Chall: I see. You were cochairman with Dan Kimball. He's from Los Angeles, and shows up frequently as a cochairman.

Gatov: He was a marvelous human being.

Chall: You say he was?

Gatov: He's dead. He was married to Doris Fleeson, the columnist. I first recall him, I guess, about '58. Dan Kimball was the kind of idealistic Democrat, regardless of everything else that he did--president of Aerojet-General, and so forth--who truly believed that people ought to participate in politics.

He was forever dreaming up registration drives, raising money from employees to go into voter phone banks, candidate contributions and so forth. He'd solicit, in his own plants--from employees--to put their money in an envelope labelled whatever they wanted to label it, you know, to give it wherever they wanted to give it, but give it! Get into it! I just adored him. He was a wonderful man.

When you called him on the telephone, you got him. A voice would answer saying, "This is Dan Kimball," [laughs] which I always found very attractive. By the time I got to Washington, they had really moved to Washington. They had a perfectly beautiful home on S Street off Connecticut Avenue. They entertained a lot, and they frequently had me. Those were just delightful dinners, just the kind that I was telling you.

Chall: What did he do? Did he have an appointment in Washington?

Gatov: No. Well, he was lobbying at the beginning, and Doris was there. She still had a column in those days. An awful lot of people have moved there who were in his sort of position. I don't mean he was there all the time. He had offices in Azusa in southern California, and outside Sacramento.

When Congress was in session, he did a lot of business with the Congress and with the Pentagon. He could spend three-quarters of his time there more usefully than he could out here.

Chall: When you were cochairman of the Pat Brown campaign, was he out here most of the time?

Gatov: No, but he was a man highly-respected by the business community, who thought it was an aberration that he should be a Democrat.

Chall: What did you do, then, during that campaign? What was your primary role? Was it different from what it had been?

Gatov: By this time, I was making speeches.

Chall: You were? You had gotten so you could make speeches without your Miltown?

Gatov: Yes, [laughs] when I was with the Treasury, I finally got over that. I still liked to have data in front of me. I didn't want to just get up with nothing. It would kind of clue me into what I was going to say next. I'd gotten over my panic.

Chall: Where did you give speeches?

Gatov: Well, any place that the governor didn't want to go. The out-of-the-way places--the Mendocino coast, various small towns in the Valley--really weren't worth his time.

Chall: So you really were his surrogate.

Gatov: Yes, he had a number of them. I was just one, but we put together a speaker's kit for all of them. I can still remember some of the facts. The most salient one being that it was necessary, at least at the end of his first administration, to have a new elementary school opened in Los Angeles County every Monday morning.

That gives you some idea of the problems of growth that he had to deal with. When I wasn't on tour, I was in the office and I had an assistant. It's hard to tell you exactly what I was doing. Answering phone calls, and talking with headquarters in other places, setting up events, telling them who was coming up as advance people. This kind of thing.

Chall: Was your territory still primarily northern California?

Gatov: Yes. I never crossed the Tehachapis. [Laughs]

Chall: Who was doing the work in southern California, if Dan Kimball was primarily a chairman in name?

Gatov: I don't recall particularly. It seems to me that Don Bradley and Fred Dutton were doing it, and Joe Cerrell. Don was probably mostly in the north and Dutton was probably mostly in the south.

Chall: So Fred Dutton left Washington too.

Gatov: I'm not sure that he did, but he spent a lot of time out here.

Chall: Then you were working primarily for the Brown campaign?

Gatov: Entirely. As I recall, he had by far the most threatening opposition, and the rest of the ticket would be seriously affected if he lost. He was the top of the ticket.

Chall: Was there the beginning of a split in the Democratic party that was evident to you at that time?

Gatov: Well, I don't know what you mean by "split," exactly.

Chall: The usual factions that might, ultimately divide the party.

Gatov: Well, yes. Jess Unruh, for instance, was always difficult, I think. I don't think he did himself any good by trying to ridicule Pat Brown, which he spent a lot of time doing. Jess was the person that I regarded most, as I recall, as a divisive force. I don't think otherwise there was any great problem. I wasn't aware of it.

Chall: You did marry around June 1962 sometime.

Gatov: Yes. Pat and Bernice came to the wedding. It was very cute. We had intended to have only family and very few close friends. My mother came out, and one of my brothers; we had just telephoned a few people. Then we were at something or other--it was a fund raiser for Pat in Tiburon--and after it was over we went to a restaurant for dinner.

Pat came in with some other people. He came over and sat down with us, and he said, "Aren't you going to invite me to your wedding?" and I said, "Pat, do you want to come? By all means." So he said, "Of course I want to come." Apparently his staff had to rearrange his schedule unbelievably. He flew into Hamilton Field, got a car to pick him up there and take him to where the wedding was. He and Bernice were just delightful. They were so cute. I have some lovely pictures of that.

Chall: I saw a few.

Gatov: Did you?

Chall: I guess they were newspaper clippings, and I'm not sure whether I saw the governor in one of them or not.

Gatov: Well, I was very, very personally fond of the two of them, in addition to being tremendously admiring of him as governor. I think he was a superb governor. So I had a very easy job, telling people what a great man he was.

Chall: I suppose there should be some comment about your divorce in 1958. Do you think your political career had anything to do with it; or might it have occurred anyway?

Gatov: It would have occurred anyway. In fact, I had tried to stave it off for five or six years, until Dan was older. An interest in politics was something Fred Smith and I shared, though my participation was greater. It was a case of "irreconcilable differences." No single factor. He had been urging me to leave him for a long time. I suspect now, that my growing self-confidence had made me less dependent, and it may have been threatening to him.

Filling the Clem Miller Vacancy

Chall: Well, 1963 one would expect to have been rather a calm year, and yet it wasn't. Clem Miller died in late 1962.

Gatov: In October, I think it was. It was just before the election, and United Press called me. I don't know why they called me, but they did, and asked if I had heard about the plane crash, and did I know where his campaign manager was, and who it was. I did know that. He was killed in a plane near Crescent City in the fog at night. I think they ran into a mountain. He was running for reelection, and he was reelected, dead. We had a horrible special election following it.

Chall: What about that special election?

Gatov: Bill Grader got the endorsement--

Chall: Of the CDC?

Gatov: Well, what remnants there were, but it was just the assembled Democratic leadership of the first district, you see. That congressional district had a caucus, and endorsed Bill Grader, who had been Clem's campaign manager.

Chall: Oh, I see. What happened?

Gatov: He ran and lost to Don Clausen, who is still there.

Chall: Were you expecting that a Republican would have it fairly easy in that area?

Gatov: It was because we didn't really have a good candidate. Bill Grader is a wonderful man, but he wears glasses that look like Coca-Cola bottles--very thick glasses. He has no presence in front of a microphone, or much of anyplace else. He is a very wealthy man in the fish business at Fort Bragg. He's still a very good finance man.

But he was not the candidate material.

Chall: Well, it was a rather hard time to put it together.

Gatov: We had nobody. This is where, to me, political parties make terrible mistakes. At least ours does. We had no member of a city council, we had nobody on a board of supervisors, we had nobody in the assembly who already had a base that we could then build up, who had been through the learning period. It's interesting to watch candidates develop. They all have to go through a seasoning and a maturation process. We didn't have anybody we could call on for a promotion, so we really had private citizens, whereas Clausen--I forget what he had done but he had run against Clem. He had been with the FBI at one point. I don't know whether that was what he was doing then or not, I suppose not.

It's a conservative district. I think it's less so now than it was then, but it was, in spite of the sawmill workers in the northern end. All of the people who identify with the lumber companies, and whose livelihood really depends on the prosperity of the lumber companies, did not like the conservationists. It was a built-in problem.

Chall: You had been on Clem Miller's election campaign committee originally, when he'd run once before?

Gatov: Did I tell you how he happened to run?

Chall: No. You told me, I think, that you would. Maybe this would be the time to do it.

Gatov: It was in 1956, and we thought we had a candidate to run, who was an attorney, a highly respected man from Santa Rosa "Duke" de Castle--which seemed like a good place to find a candidate in those days. Sonoma County was the biggest county in the district, and it was half rural, half suburban. Well, everything was just great.

This man came down to Marin County and met with our Democratic club, and they asked him a lot of impossible questions, impossible for him to answer, because you had to have been a practicing liberal member

Gatov: of a club to even know the questions, much less the answers. They were CDC-type issues and questions, which he'd never thought about. So he went home after that evening very chastened. We were going to go up and see him within three or four days, because filing was one week off; the close of filing was one week off. We went up to see him and sat on the floor of his law office, four or five of us. Clem among them.

Clem had offered to take the rest of the year off and drive this man around. He was a man in his fifties, I guess, so Clem thought he could get to know the district and get into politics really in a practical way.

Chall: Clem Miller was really pushing this person?

Gatov: Oh yes, very much. We didn't know it at that time, but Clem did have money--quite a lot of money of his own. He used to run around in old clothes, he was a member of the laborer's union, and he had a Christmas tree farm, and that was about all we knew about him. And a lovely wife and five daughters!

Anyway, we called on Duke de Castle, our preferred candidate. He said, "I'm sorry, I cannot deal with people like that, and if those are the people I have to convince to get elected to Congress, I can't do it. So, sorry." He was referring to the club people.

We got back in the car and we drove down from Santa Rosa to my house. We thought we'd have a drink on the terrace and review the bidding. A week to go! How could we possibly get a candidate? After a couple of drinks, we began looking at Clem, [laughs] who after all had volunteered to take the time off. This was seen to be the greatest asset he had--he didn't have to work during these months. So Clem said, "Okay, I'll run." He meant, "I'll go file, take one trip through the district and see what it looks like, but of course I won't do a real campaign."

Well, as never fails to happen when people say they'll just make a token candidacy, pretty soon they wind up thinking they're going to win, and they get more and more into it, and see themselves as "the peoples' choice"! He darned near did win--he came within five percent, much to everybody's astonishment. The next time, the Republican incumbent Hubert Scudder did not run. He scared him out of it, because Clem never stopped. He kept right on campaigning the next two years up and down Highway 101, and was in a very strong position by the time he finally won.

Chall: So in 1958 he won.

Gatov: And what a change it made in his brief remaining life! From a person of great self-doubt, and insecurity, and peevishness against the Establishment and society. He was an angry young man.

Chall: I see--he was young?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: He was a young liberal of the CDC type?

Gatov: Yes. I'd say he was about thirty-one or two. He wrote a remarkable book called Letters of a Congressman.

Chall: I've seen some of the letters. I thought he had a most unusual approach to his office, in his way of writing letters, which were so different from the usual newsletter.

Gatov: I used to enjoy going there for dinner too, when I was in Washington. They were very good friends.

Chall: So in 1963, it was a rough year. You lost a senator, a congressman--

Gatov: In '62 we lost the congressman, and in '63 we lost Clair Engle and the president. We had heavy hearts in those days.

Chall: And not only did you have heavy hearts, but it's hard on the party.

Gatov: Terribly hard. It never recovered I don't think. The spirit was gone.

Chall: It left openings for all the various factions to move into, particularly in the Senate.

Gatov: That was in '64.

Chall: Let's talk about the 1964 campaign.

Gatov: That begins about in the fall--August or September--of '63, when we were driving home--my husband and my stepdaughter and I--from the mountains. We were on the Black Point cutoff, listening to the car radio. The news came over the radio that Senator Engle had been hospitalized with a brain tumor. We were just shocked. We went home and started to telephone, and found out that yes, indeed--he had.

We knew his administrative assistant very well, Chuck Bosley. He was a very fine young man. (Not the one he originally had; another one.) He began keeping us informed. Dan Kimball was invaluable in this. He had been undersecretary of the Navy. Or secretary? I'm not

CLEM MILLER
1ST DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE
BANKING AND CURRENCY

135 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

CAPITOL 4-3121, EXTENSION 3311

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D. C.

May 30, 1959

Dear Friend:

This is "mark-up" time for the Public Works Bill in the Appropriations Committee. After sifting through witnesses that take up space the size of a New York telephone book, the Committee is deciding what it will put into the bill and what it will not.

Because there is so much talk about public works and about "pork barrel" it is worth knowing something about how the whole system operates. Perhaps a better understanding of it will render a verdict that is not so harsh.

There is an elaborate procedure that a public works project must go through before it sees the light of construction. Beginning with the recommendation of the local congressman who, in turn, is acting on local needs, it proceeds through a ten or twelve step approval process which includes Congress three or four times, the Corps of Engineers at many levels, the President, the Bureau of the Budget and other interested federal and state agencies. This ordinarily takes a long, long time. A project may never reach the construction phase. There are many excellent projects in the First District authorized in 1939 or 1945 which have received no funds to reach the final step for one reason or another.

The Corps of Engineers is the first hurdle, and perhaps the last one too. At every step their assessment of the urgency, their

Gatov: sure. Something or other with the navy, in any case, and was therefore able to get information out of Bethesda Hospital, which was not the information Mrs. Engle was giving to the press. So we knew it was going to be fatal, and that it had been inoperable, and that he was not ever going to get better. It was going to be worse.

So what to do? That was the situation in which we found ourselves. We began having meetings at Pat Brown's office to discuss it, because by this time Stanley Mosk the attorney general had surfaced as a potential candidate. He wanted to run, and Alan Cranston wanted to run, and I'm sure there were many others, but these were the two chief ones.

Chall: What about James Roosevelt? Did he come in later?

Gatov: He came in later--too late, really. He never had the stature that the other two did. He'd run for governor, if you remember, in 1950, and was just absolutely routed by Earl Warren. It was never taken seriously in northern California, where the political muscle still lay. Now it's in the south, but in those days, the north, even though it was numerically smaller, still pretty much called the shots.

Chall: So at least you knew you had Cranston and Mosk?

Gatov: And then what to do about Stanley. Sheriff Pitchess, from Los Angeles, had brought in some personal material which could have been used against Stanley in a campaign--some hankey-pankey. The whole thing was gamy, I guess is the best word to use. Not able to be substantiated quickly, but obviously known or it would never have reached Pat from the sources from which it came. So the warning signal really was--if Mosk runs--if the Democrats won't use it against him, the Republicans certainly will. And here was the chief law-enforcement officer of the state with these rather questionable associations.

[end Tape 10, side 2]

VIII DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEEWOMAN FOR CALIFORNIA, 1963-1965
(Interview 11, May 12, 1976)
[begin Tape 11, side 1]

The Senate and Presidential Campaigns, 1964

[While preparing for the interview Mrs. Chall and Mrs. Gatov discussed the problems concerning selection of an acceptable chairman of the Democratic party for northern California in 1975.]

Gatov: Finding good leadership for the Democratic state central committee--North, has been a difficult problem since Bob Coate gave it up.

We held several informal discussions, people interested in the party--mentioning everybody they could think of.

Chall: That means that there's no leadership coming up from the grass-roots.

Gatov: That's exactly right, which is sad.

Chall: I wonder why that has happened?

Gatov: Well, because things are so difficult today, I think. Fund raising is difficult. There isn't the feeling that we're out. Do you know what I mean? It's much easier to build a mass movement based on grass-roots support if you're trying to achieve something which is not within reach. At the moment, we are not in that situation. We've got darn near everything we could possibly get, in this particular area of northern California.

We've most of the congressional seats, most of the legislative seats. We now have a mayor [in San Francisco] who's party minded, and has been very supportive in San Francisco, and we've got the governorship.

Chall: Now we can fall apart! [Laughter]

Gatov: In our usual way, and this is what frequently happens. [Laughs]

Bill Roth, for example, would have been an ideal person to take this office, and he wouldn't touch it. It was impossible to find anybody of individual stature, who knew what he or she was doing, who would function.

Chall: Why wouldn't Bill Roth, for example, take it?

Gatov: It's a dirty job. It's a hideously intrusive job. You have no privacy at all. Bill has been through too much. He's been part of the structure for a long time, and that's all he wanted to remain, just part of the structure. He wanted somebody else to be the one to carry the burden that we'd been through--Roger Boas and Bob Coate. Who was the last one of the four? I can't recall.*

In any case, it didn't lead to anything. The same sort of situation's true of the national committee. It's much more likely to work when we're out of power in the White House.

Chall: And struggling to get back in?

Gatov: Struggling to get back in.

Chall: You have to have party unity.

Gatov: And as soon as you have the White House, the White House takes over.

Replacing Senator Engle

Chall: Well, speaking of divisiveness in the party, we were talking about the Senate campaign the last time, the Senate campaign of 1964. You had been telling me that a group of you had met, shortly after you learned about Engle's illness, in Pat Brown's office, trying to decide what to do. I didn't ask you at the time who were in that group.

Gatov: I don't recall, either, except that I'm sure Don Bradley was one of them, and I imagine Roger Kent was one of them.

*Joe Holsinger, 1968-1971; Jack Brooks, 1971; John Merlo, 1971-1973; Mary Widener, 1973-1975; Robert Schwartz, 1975-1976; Bert Coffey, 1976-1977--vice-chairman, northern California, Democratic State Central Committee.

Chall: And you were.

Gatov: And I was. Who else was there, probably was part of Pat Brown's staff. I think probably Hale Champion might have been there, and maybe Fred Dutton. I don't know. Those are the probables. As I recall, there were five or six who were meeting in the inner office, which is not a very large office.

We were confronted with a real problem, because first we had to make sure that Clair really was as badly off as our reports indicated he was, because his wife would not admit it. She kept saying, in each of her reports, that he was getting better all the time.

Finally it was decided that some of us should go to Washington. We went right after the first of the year, as I recall. It was January. I remember Pat Brown was there.

Chall: In Washington, too?

Gatov: In Washington. I was there, and I'm trying to think who else. I don't recall who else was in the California contingent. I think it was more of the governor's staff. In any case, my job was to do two things. One, get an appointment to go see Clair and to see Hubert Humphrey. Don Bradley was there.

Chall: Not Eugene Wyman?

Gatov: No, not that I recall. The first thing I had to do was go see Senator Humphrey, who was then the majority leader, on the worst of all possible days for him. It was the opening of the session. I sent him word that I wanted to talk about Senator Engle, and what we should do about it. He was very responsive and saw me quickly. I just said, "We don't know how to handle this."

He said, "Well, I'll tell you how to handle it. You pick one other candidate, and get the whole party behind one candidate, because," he said, "Clair's name will probably be on your ballot, if he's alive. Considering the situation with Mrs. Engle, it may be very difficult to keep the seat."

So I remember asking him, "What about the other members of the Senate?" He described Clair's condition in terms of how ill he was when he would come to the floor; he would be brought in by his A.A., who would, in effect, vote for him. He said, "It's terrible. We know what the situation is." So he guaranteed that no senators coming to California would blast at us for presuming to, in effect, remove a senator from office.

Gatov: It was a very sticky situation, as you can imagine, and we had to handle it with some finesse. Otherwise, the press, which was normally Republican in California, could make it very difficult for us.

Chall: I see. You went to Senator Humphrey because he was the leader of the Senate?

Gatov: Yes. He was fine. Then my husband, I, and Don Bradley, and probably somebody else--I don't remember who--were invited to the Engles for cocktails. I believe it was that same afternoon. So we went to the house, the living room, and Clair came in. It was a shattering experience for me. It was as though he were drifting in and out of the room, mentally. He would laugh inappropriately, and much too long. It was as though he heard and understood perhaps half of what was going on, but then was following some other train of thought that came into his mind that had very little to do with it.

Lu, his wife, treated him as though he was perfectly normal, and in total charge of himself. She kept saying, "Isn't it wonderful how well he looks?" It was terrible for us. When we left, we got into a cab and I just collapsed. I cried and cried, because it was so terrible to me to see this man being forced to go through the motions of things that he was incapable of doing.

Chall: What was the point, do you think? She wrote you a letter in October--I found it in your papers--saying that he was coming along all right, and that Pat Brown should just keep quiet.

Gatov: Well, I don't know if it had anything to do with such matters as his pension, which I think it could have. He had been in the House for fourteen years, and I guess this would complete his sixth year in the Senate because he was up for reelection. That would make twenty, which is the maximum time of service. That is, anything you serve over twenty years doesn't increase your pension.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Gatov: This could have been it. I'm just speculating.

Chall: Well, I just wondered if she had something in mind about his replacement.

Gatov: It's possible she did. I suppose that it's even possible that she thought about replacing him herself.

Well, the next day, I believe, Alan Cranston wanted to go to see him. He was there in Washington with us, but he wasn't present at the first meeting. So Alan persuaded me to go back with him, which I didn't want to do. He wanted somebody there, and I was still acceptable to Lu, more or less, so I went.

- Gatov: Alan, I think, just wanted to verify to himself the situation. He didn't want to take it from anybody else. That was the last time I saw him, or her. At the end of January or early February, there was going to be a CDC endorsing convention in southern California, I think.
- Chall: [Refers to notes] It was at Long Beach on February 22.
- Gatov: That's right, on Washington's birthday. Then an interesting thing happened. Jerry [Jerome] Waldie was then part of the structure in the assembly, and Jess Unruh was the Speaker.
- Chall: By this time, now, a small group of you had decided on Alan Cranston.
- Gatov: Yes, and the fact that he was the most electable.
- Chall: Had you told Stanley Mosk that he was not going to be acceptable to those of you who were in power, because he did try to get the endorsement, didn't he, at the CDC convention?
- Gatov: I don't recall that he did. He was there.
- Chall: You may be right.
- Gatov: I'm not sure that his name was ever placed in nomination. If it were, it was after a great many conferences had taken place. He may have been placed in nomination, but by this time, his support had been pretty weakened.
- Chall: I see. I have a note here, and I always like to corroborate these things. It says, "Mosk, sensing the orientation for Cranston at the convention, requested a multiple endorsement policy, but withdrew his name later, when that policy failed."
- Gatov: That was it. I couldn't remember what it was, but probably there had been some sort of a test of strength.
- Chall: That's all right. It goes back a long way. We look in the book!
[Laughter]
- Gatov: It had been some sort of a test. Well, obviously, he took himself out. Before we got there, there was this strange behavior on the part of Jess Unruh and Jerry Waldie. Jess was the Speaker of the assembly, and Jerry was the majority whip or something. In any case, Jerry Waldie took off for Washington about three weeks after we had been there. He said that he had had a meeting with Clair Engle, and reported him as coming along beautifully, and that his sense of humor was in fine working

Gatov: order; he wanted to make a report to the people of California that the senator would be filing for renomination and running; and he expected to win, and would lead an active campaign.

I heard this on the radio, and was stunned at the terrible lie that was being given to the people of California. It was an atrocious thing to do, in my view. It was so false. The administrative assistant Chuck Bosley is now living in West Virginia someplace outside of Washington, writing a book, I believe.

Some of us would talk to him from time to time, which was very difficult for him, because he was under orders from Lu Engle--Mrs. Engle--to say one thing, and he had to say something else, and did. But we couldn't ever attribute it to him. So what we knew was going on, was that there was some kind of a game being played, in which Clair was being used as a pawn to prevent the endorsement from going to Cranston. This was our analysis of what the ploy was.

Lu Engle wanted somebody else. Obviously Jess Unruh wanted somebody else. He and Cranston have never been friendly, nor had he and Engle been friendly, either. Clair didn't like him at all.

But, in any case, he just wanted a senator that he could--well, shall we say--work with? Or, to put it more strongly, run or control? Whatever. Jess was regarded in those days as the number one Democrat, never mind the governor, in the state. What you had was a lineup of supporters of Pat Brown and the supporters of Jess Unruh. That's oversimplified, but basically, that's what it was.

The White House didn't have any high regard for Pat, because he had been so portrayed as a fellow who really didn't know what he was doing in the 1960 campaign.

Chall: Even though Johnson is in power now?

Gatov: Even though Johnson was in power, but he really didn't have any relationship with Brown, because Brown was a very strong Kennedy supporter. There wasn't, as I think I explained, very much communication between the two. [Laughs] So Johnson had no particular relationship with Pat Brown. Many of the Kennedy people were still in the White House, still certainly running the national committee, when Johnson became president, and through his campaign. There was Jesse, who I say, was number one.

Pierre Salinger's Campaign

Gatov: It all became clear after Cranston got the endorsement from CDC, and started to run. The day before filing closed, Pierre Salinger flew into San Francisco, and the next morning--Friday morning, which was the final day of filing--held a press conference at the Fairmont, which I went to. It was very well attended. Pierre announced that he was running, and was on his way down to City Hall in San Francisco to file.

Two things about that that are significant--one is Don Bradley's role, and the other was the effort to keep Pierre off the ballot, as an illegal candidate. Quentin Kopp, interestingly enough, was the attorney for Pierre who successfully argued that he could be on the ballot, as did Stanley Mosk. Stanley immediately supported Pierre.

Chall: Yes, I wanted to ask you about that. Why was that?

Gatov: Stanley, you see, was reacting in a very normal way to the implication that somehow or other, he shouldn't run. What was this, in a Democratic society, somebody telling somebody that they couldn't run?

Chall: Didn't you all tell him why you felt it was unsafe for him to run?

Gatov: Well, I wasn't part of whatever group told him. I presume he was told by someone that Pat Brown would not support him, and that Pat Brown was going to support Cranston.

Chall: And the reason why?

Gatov: I presume the question was asked. I don't know what the answer was. I wasn't there. I know that Stanley, to this day, thinks that Cranston is the one who produced all the materials [against him] and gave them to Pat. I know this was not the case, but nevertheless, he still thinks it is, because Cranston was the one who benefitted. It's too bad, but these things have long lives.

Anyway, to get back to Pierre: there was Stanley, who was the national committeeman, working sort of the Washington end for Pierre, to try to get good publicity, and so on, for his entry into the race. Quentin Kopp was handling the legal side of whether or not Pierre was a resident of California or Virginia.

Chall: Any reason why it would have been Quentin Kopp?

Gatov: Quentin Kopp was interested in Pierre. Why--I don't know why. This was early in Quentin's political life.

Chall: It wasn't just a chance lawyer picked up.

Gatov: No, it was not, I'm sure of that. I don't know how come. Then the decision was finally based on a constitutional description of what you need to do to be a senator. You only need to be an American citizen and over whatever the age requirement is. Thirty, I believe. It doesn't say anything, as strict as it is about other offices, about residency.

While Pierre was saying, "My heart's always been in California, I just happen to live in Virginia," [laughs] this didn't matter. Much to everybody's astonishment. There were a lot of other people who felt that you had to live in the area that you were going to represent. But you didn't. So the race was on.

Chall: Mr. Hatcher came out--?

Gatov: Mr. Hatcher came out. He had worked as Pierre's assistant as press secretary. I'm sure that Pierre wanted out in the first place. He didn't like Johnson, and he did not want to stay. This was a good way out, a nice exit. It gave him an opportunity--though I don't know that he thought about it at the time--to cash in on President Kennedy's memory.

Chall: You don't think he thought about that?

Gatov: Oh, I won't say that he did. He did, ultimately, but all of this happened rather quickly, as far as I'm aware. Maybe quietly it was being put together for months, but I wasn't part of it, so I don't know.

In any case, he arrived. Bradley was with him, even though he kept telling me he was going to stay with the governor. I would call him every day to see where he was in this campaign; every day he would give me the same answer, "I'm standing with the governor," which meant Cranston. At least, that's what he meant me to make of it.

Finally, ten days had gone by, and then Don made his decision publicly to support Pierre. I was very, very upset by that. Not that he was supporting Pierre, but that he lied to me for ten days, after a very long--and I thought open--relationship. His explanation was simply, "Pierre's my friend."

Chall: And the governor?

Gatov: It was inadequate to me. It really didn't help Don at all, in the long run. We went through the campaign. It was very difficult for him, and for us because the party was split right down the middle. Money was

Gatov: hard to come by. Even though Alan had run several statewide campaigns, he was not a particularly well-known personality--not nearly, really, as well known as Pierre, who had some glamour attached to him because of JFK. It was just as if somebody were to ask you quickly, "Who's the controller of California today?" You might have to think for a minute or two. This was the position that Cranston was in.

However, he did very well. He was a tireless campaigner. Everything was going well until toward the very end, when we learned from southern California that something was up. There was going to be a printed surprise, and we didn't know what. Usually, you can find out what's being printed, as we did, for instance in the election fraud lawsuit case against Nixon in 1962. Printers will talk. Yes, they have an order from so-and-so. There are no secrets about it.

Obviously, this was being done out of the state, because none of the print shops had it. It arrived on the Monday morning before the election, and it was a brilliant piece of campaign strategy. It was engineered by Jesse, and financed by Jesse. He had raised the money for it, and it must have been very expensive.

I'll describe what it was. It was a double-fold card, blank on the outside of both sides. On the inside, when you opened it up, it had a picture on the left of President Kennedy bordered in black. Across the top, in sort of Spencerian script, it said "In his tradition," and then on the right-hand side, it had a mock-up of a ballot, four or five lines. Then it said, "Pierre Salinger," with an X opposite his name, and down at the bottom, it said, "Your polling place is..." and it gave the address. It was first-class mail, and it arrived the Monday morning before the election to every registered Democrat in Los Angeles County, perhaps two million out of six million people. I would say it was between a million and a half, and two million pieces which had been precincted, which means that every residence had been geared into the polling place, which is a very expensive thing to do.

That's where Cranston lost the primary.

Chall: Salinger got a 165,000 vote plurality in Los Angeles. Apparently, in the rest of the state it was even.

Gatov: So that's how that happened. I have to assume that. It was brilliant capitalizing on emotion and a relationship in the most tasteful way. It would not have been offensive to get this.

Chall: You'd wished you had used it yourself!

Gatov: If we'd been able to! [Laughter] If we'd had the brains to think about it, and the money to pay for it. Anyhow, that ended that, and Pierre became the senator. No, he was nominated.

Gatov: Then Pat appointed him to the Senate to fill the vacancy because Clair had died that summer.

Chall: Any reason why? He didn't have to. It was nice of him to do it, but he didn't have to.

Gatov: He didn't have to. I think it was a way he felt of repairing a breach. He'd supported Cranston, and Cranston lost. Pierre won, and I think Pat saw it was a way of bringing both sides together again. That was Pat's way. He was a healer more than a divider. It turned out to be a fatal mistake for Pierre, but I certainly wasn't aware of it at the time. I had no idea how much resentment this was going to cause, this candidacy of Pierre.

Chall: Where did it cause the resentment?

Gatov: It caused resentment one, among Republicans, who frankly weren't very much of a factor, it didn't seem to me. I don't see why with the vote that he had, and the advantage of being the incumbent senator, why he should have to worry about what the Republicans thought. But there was another group in the middle, apparently, who were quite offended. They may have been Cranston voters. They may have been independents who thought this was too partisan to stomach. They felt that the choice had been taken out of their hands. There was a great deal of public resentment. Pat was the one who initially carried it. He carried the burden of it.

Chall: Who's to know, sometimes? I guess you can't always think these things through and understand how they will end.

Gatov: Well, the traditional thing to do in a case like that is to appoint somebody like Dan Kimball, a nice senior party worker who will do you no disgrace, and would enjoy being called "Senator" for the rest of his life. It's just a nice thing to do. And a guarantee that he won't run for the office.

Chall: And it allows the voters to say, "We will make our choice."

Gatov: This is what might have saved the seat. I don't know. I can't say that with any assurance, because there were other things too. But in any case, this was an immediate blow to Pierre's candidacy. Everything was done that was possible by Alan to heal the breach. He appeared everywhere with Pierre, and kept asking his supporters to support him.

Anyway, they came to the national convention, and something happened at Atlantic City. I don't know what. Pierre was very much of a celebrity there. He's a very conspicuous person, to start with, and he was given to wearing Hawaiian shirts; with his portly frame that made him

Gatov: even more conspicuous. He apparently said something about President Johnson. I couldn't quote it exactly, but I gather the inference was, "I will carry Johnson on my back in California."

You know--it would be his campaign, and he would let Johnson ride along with him. Anyhow, before we left Atlantic City, it was known that Johnson was mad at Pierre for something and had issued orders that his campaign and Pierre's were in no way to be associated. He wouldn't have joint campaign headquarters, he wouldn't have joint events, he wouldn't go to anything for Pierre, and he didn't want Pierre featured at anything given for him. I'm sure I knew at the time what it was.

Chall: That's an expensive problem right there, isn't it?

Gatov: [Chuckles] Yes. I was in the Johnson campaign, and it was a very easy campaign, particularly in northern California, because the Goldwater forces were very weak. Everything we put on for Johnson worked beautifully; it was a very pleasant and easy thing. There was a TV debate between Salinger and Murphy [George], and whatever the lack of Murphy's political credentials, his competence in front of a television camera was never in question.

He was a very attractive-looking man, with a great deal of Irish charm. His hair was quite gray, (I think it had been dark) and he had blue eyes that were very twinkly, and a very benign expression on his face, and a very courtly manner. This was a great contrast [laughs] to the sort of thug-like image that Pierre managed to project. He always needed a shave; his features were coarse; his language was coarse; and it was really a most uneven contest.

Chall: Was this on television?

Gatov: On television. Even though Murphy was saying perfectly dreadful things. He was asked about the farm workers. I can't remember what the question was, but he said something to the effect that, "Mexicans like to do that work with the short-handled hoe because they were built so close to the ground."

Chall: Oh, my.

Gatov: [Laughs ruefully] Things like that. Anybody else would have been absolutely devastated if they'd been up against a competent opponent. That's a sample of his insensitivity to any social situation. But the public looked at the two of them [laughs] and there was no question.

Chall: At least in Los Angeles. I guess there he had his 150,000 margin, in Los Angeles County.

Gatov: Well, in retrospect, it would have been much better if Pierre had stayed in Washington, and just issued messages about how hard he was working, trying to catch up on all the unfinished business of the state that had been left since Clair was sick, and been a senator, as they are trying to make Ford do now--being president. Instead of that, as I say, he roamed the state as though he were running for sheriff, in these Hawaiian shirts. [Laughs] He lost.

Chall: What about Proposition 14? Do you think that had any effect? He did come out against Proposition 14.

Gatov: The good side, versus the bad.

Chall: Yes, that was the side for the Rumford bill.

Gatov: That was for open housing.

Chall: That was a bitter campaign. He at least took that opposing stand. Now some people feel that may have done him in.

Gatov: I think that's an excuse, more than anything else. I'm having a little difficulty thinking of a comparable situation, but I don't think that was as emotional a factor, except for those of us who were on the No side. I was one, and because there wasn't much doing really in the Johnson campaign, that took much effort, I did a lot of things for "No on 14."

We kept saying to ourselves that because of the wording of it, people were going to be confused and vote Yes when they meant No, and so on. None of that turned out to be the case--as they did in-depth surveys later. The public knew exactly what they were doing. I don't think the Yes side was all that bitter. In other words, it's an easy out to say that he went down in glory because he defended the rights of minorities to live where they wanted to.

But I really don't think that had as much to do with it as what I'd expect. Any more for instance than Jerry Brown isn't being hurt at all, as far as I can tell, by his refusal to take a stand on Proposition 15, which is, I think, equally fraught with emotion.* I've listened to him get the question and answer it. He just says, "I will have to give this a lot more thought before I make up my mind." People will climb down his throat, and he just sticks with his position.

*Nuclear energy initiative on the June, 1976 ballot in California.

Gatov: "It's a very difficult and complicated subject. I'm going to have to study it very closely." He'll be studying it until the eighth of June. [Laughs] But I don't think people are going to take it out on him. I'm not sure.

This was not all that Pierre campaigned on, after all. He'd just come out for it. Any more than Senator Tunney is campaigning on his "No on 15." If he gets a question, this is where he is. That's all he says about it. He looked at it, made up his mind, and that's where he is.

I couldn't possibly blame the anti-Tunney vote--which will come for a variety of reasons--on that. It's a very small minority, I think.

Chall: Have you any idea why Mrs. Engle and Engle's brother got on the train going through northern California with Pierre Salinger, and came out for Salinger and against Cranston in the primary?

Gatov: I would expect that this was made attractive to them in some way. Clair, meantime, had died. He died, I believe, at the end of April.

Chall: I have it here as July 30. April 28 he withdrew from the campaign.

Gatov: Oh, after the primary then. That's probably correct. I can only say that the impression prior to that was that Jesse and Jerry Waldie were cooperating with Lu Engle. This can mean all kinds of things, but I'd rather not speculate on what it may have meant.

Chall: Apparently what I've been learning is that in campaigns and in politics, people have their own little areas--sometimes rather confined--and they don't really know what the other fellow's doing. Maybe sometimes that's deliberate, and sometimes it's because you're all too busy.

Gatov: Let's just speculate a little bit. Why did Jerry Waldie go back to see Clair who was in the condition I just described, which anybody would truthfully tell you he was in, and come back here and tell such a blatant lie?

Chall: Carmen Warschaw said much the same thing about Engle. I found it in her papers.

Gatov: There was a reason, but I don't know what the reason was.

Chall: Since we're seeking facts, I guess there's no need to ask you to speculate.

Gatov: No.

Alan Cranston's Campaign

- Chall: I found in your papers a speech you made about Alan Cranston. The first line or two of it are typed, and the rest is in your handwriting. I assume that you made this speech for Alan Cranston at the CDC convention. Did you speak for Alan Cranston at that?
- Gatov: I can't recall. I may have been one of his seconders. I don't know.
- Chall: You made an interesting point here, that Alan Cranston would undoubtedly be the Democratic incumbent in the Senate race if he had not stepped aside at the request of the party leadership in favor of Clair Engle in 1958. That was so?
- Gatov: Yes.
- Chall: I don't remember that we talked about it; but I've probably forgotten.
- Gatov: It was a minor, not a major incident at the time. During the summer of 1957--as you know, that was the year of the great euphoria in the Democratic party. We thought we could win anything. Prior to that year, in '56, Clair had been the chairman of the Stevenson campaign for the purpose of exposing him to people all over the state, because he was so little known outside of the Second Congressional District, which was the whole of the Sierra chain of counties, but none of the metropolitan districts. That was deliberate.

The Hellers and Pat Brown and everybody else were involved in this Stevenson campaign; it went very well. Cranston was not impressed by this little sort of "warmup." He had always wanted to be a United States Senator, from the time he was twenty-six or seven. Foreign policy was his big thing. He wrote a book about the Breaking of the Peace--I think that was the title of it. It was about Chamberlain and the efforts that he made to achieve some sort of stability in Europe just prior to World War II. Then Cranston was a war correspondent.

He was sued by Adolf Hitler for bringing the original version of Mein Kampf to this country and having it translated and published. He's very proud of that. [Laughs] Then he became president of the California branch of the United World Federalists, and then he became national president of the United World Federalists, so you can see his orientation was toward international and foreign policy. The only place you can do much about that is in the Senate.

He didn't run for Congress, when he might have, but took this relatively obscure statewide office of controller because it gave him statewide exposure, with the intention that one day he would run for the

Gatov: Senate, hopefully. He finally did in '64. He had just been president of CDC, or maybe he still was. I can't recall.

Anyhow, prior to deciding to run for controller, he went around getting endorsements, particularly for some of the labor unions, in the summer of '57. He had some rather unpleasant material printed about Clair and some of his votes, which were not pro labor. Clair was a very conservative Democrat. He became less so, but when he started out, he really was pretty conservative.

Pat and some of the others--I wasn't one of them--did persuade Alan to pull out of the Senate race. Pat again was willing to exert himself. He said that he was going to run for governor, no question about that, and he would not run with Alan. He wanted to run with Clair. He felt Clair was stronger, and he wanted a strong running mate.

Chall: Why did he think Clair Engle was stronger?

Gatov: Because he'd had fourteen years experience in the House of Representatives, was chairman of the House Interior Committee, and was very knowledgeable on federal matters. He wanted it, and I guess, more or less, commitments had been made to him by people who would also be supporting Pat--that they would support him. So Alan said, "Okay, if that's the way you feel about it, I'll pull out and run for something else." That's when he ran for controller.

Chall: So he really was ready in 1964.

Gatov: Yes, he really was.

Chall: I'm interested in your tally sheet here from the CDC convention. The districts are set for tallying as if number one would be a district in northern California and number twenty, next in line, would be a district in southern California.

Gatov: That's right. This was deliberate. Instead of having one end of the state do all its voting first, which could influence the other side of the state, they split it. They'd take the number one district in the north, the number twenty district in the south, the number two in the north, number twenty-one in the south, and so forth. This is how that was done, to prevent a steamroller kind of psychological impact.

Chall: CDC has always worked this way?

Gatov: I don't think they did initially, no. I think that somebody probably called it to their attention. The north, which had the early number districts, was exerting undue influence. Therefore, let's do this.

1964 CONVENTION -- TALLY SHEET

District	No. of Delegates Accredited	No. of Delegates Voting	CRANSTON	ENGLE	ROOSEVELT	McCLAIN	FIELD
1	7 61	54	35	2	17		
20	2 71		34	10	27	1	
2	56			56			
21	42		1	21	19		
3	3 38	35	34	1			
22	72	71	31	62	33		
4	3 39	36	125 24	9	72 3		
23	49		148 23	10	81 9		
5 & 6	5 99	94	193 45	122 7	90 41		1
24	52		210 20	5	146 24		
XR	----- 6th District votes with the 5th District -----						
25	23						
7 & 8	4 92	88 3 1/2	276 66 14	52 11	3 8 15 11	5 6	
26	140						
XR	----- 8th District votes with the 7th District -----						
27	21	21	264 10	2	166 9		
9	45	45	307 21	4	186 20		
28	194		393 86	13	271 93		
10	70	70	457 64	2	283 4		
29	3 77	74	499 42	10	305 22		
11	4 68	64	546 44	180 1	324 19		
30	64		580 34	7	347 17		
12	47	47	608 28	1	359 18		
31	2 65	63	649 41	11	370 11		
13	4 65	61	684 35	203 4	392 22		
32	133	33	701 17	206 3	405 13		
14	73	73	752 51	210 4	423 18		

Chall: Alan Cranston wrote you and your husband a letter of deep thanks for your role in his primary election. I would like to know what, actually, you were doing?

Gatov: I spent every day, or nearly every day, in his headquarters on Market Street. Al was finance chairman for northern California. I was trying to do organization for him. We had a very small staff. I think there were two, maybe three paid people. The rest of us were volunteers. I was just doing whatever I knew how to do in those days, which was try to get people in the counties and in the communities to raise money and to put campaigns together for him. I handled mailings and this sort of thing.

Chall: Did you find that there were some people that you used to count on who were not with you this time?

Gatov: Oh, yes. That happens in every campaign. There's always a different lineup.

Chall: Even in northern California?

Gatov: Oh, yes.

[end Tape 11, side 1; begin Tape 11, side 2]

Gatov: I was trying to do organizing, which is not a conspicuous job. You sit in a room on the telephone.

Chall: And call all your old friends.

Gatov: And get calluses on your ears. You telephone old friends or people you never heard of, and tell them what you want. That was a very nice letter.

Chall: Yes, it was a nice letter, and I thought that it was very fine of him to say that he would work for Salinger.

Gatov: He did. He's a very fine man. He's not very well known, because Alan's personality is rather private. He did a lovely thing for me. I haven't got it on today, but he gave me some opals that belonged to his mother, as sort of a thank-you for things I've done. I had them made into a ring. It's just lovely. It was a really nice thing to do.

Chall: I see you served as cochairman with Dan Kimball, so that meant that he was working in the south for Cranston.

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: About a day or two, I think, before the election, or within a week, you issued a press statement.

Gatov: [Laughs] Oh, yes.

Chall: That's not generally in character. You usually don't come out and issue press statements. This was about the kind of campaign that Salinger was waging [reading portions], his employing ugly tactics, and his slanderous accusations made in collusion with Republicans against Cranston, and the State's inheritance tax appraisers and scorn on Governor Brown, and all the rest.

You felt, apparently, that you really had to say something this way?

Gatov: Well, somebody had to. One of the uses of a campaign chairman--really, just about the major use--is to make public statements if it's necessary to make them. So since I was it, I did it. That's the one that the press picked up and called me by my first name. There was a clipping about it, "Libby Is Mad," or something. [Laughs] It's in that pile of press clippings.

Chall: I probably took this out of the press clippings without noticing that one.

Gatov: It was very funny, I thought.

Chall: In that same article--that was the San Francisco Examiner--they said that a big chunk of Brown's political prestige is on the line in this primary election for the Senate. Brown was then predicting a close Cranston victory. However, according to a legislative aide, "He hasn't done any hard campaigning for Alan because he hasn't felt he needed to. Also, the long legislative session kept him busy." I was wondering whether he was trying to stay in the background so that he wouldn't lose any prestige.

Gatov: I would think so. That's quite reasonable. I think Alan--it would be like him not to put any pressure on Brown to do it, realizing that he was getting the most mileage out of it anyway by being able to say, "Governor Brown is supporting me." He didn't need Pat to run around the state making speeches for him. Alan's a very decent person, and would not exploit somebody's reservoir of good will for his own benefit.

Chall: That was a very divisive campaign.

Gatov: Yes, it was awful.

Relationships Between Pat Brown and the White House

Chall: I think it was in your papers that I found an article from the Wall Street Journal of June 5, 1963--before it all started. Kennedy was still alive, and they were concerned about what was really going on in California with everyone thinking ahead to the next governors' campaign, and what that would do to the 1964 Kennedy campaign. Already they were considering the 1966 gubernatorial interests of Alan Cranston, Stanley Mosk, Glenn Anderson, Jesse Unruh, and Pat Brown. Pat Brown is quoted as feeling he was not getting any credit for having defeated both William Knowland and Richard Nixon.

Gatov: This brings me to something that I have to get in here somplace. This is the role of Fred Dutton. I don't think I've said much about that in this series.

Chall: No.

Gatov: Well, Fred Dutton went to Washington with Jack Kennedy, when he became president, and was appointed to the job of secretary of the cabinet, which is a very in-house kind of job. The Irish Mafia, so to speak, which meant O'Brien and O'Donnell particularly, didn't like him. They felt that he was untrustworthy. I didn't like him because I had an opportunity in Washington to see far more of the friends--friends is too strong a word--the connections I had made over the years with people in the national press.

It became very clear--and I prefer not to name names--but every so often, one of them would invite me out to lunch or something, and talk to me about what was happening in California. There was in those days a great mystique about "nobody understands California." We were supposed to be a very peculiar and difficult-to-understand area. So the few of us who were there--there weren't really so few--were subjects of great interest to the press.

It was particularly of interest to them to ask one person after another what they thought was going to happen to Pat, what the relationship was between Pat and Jesse, and so forth, and so forth. It was from the press that I learned that their greatest source of anti-Pat Brown information was Fred Dutton.

Chall: But he had been Pat Brown's executive secretary?

Gatov: Exactly. I kept reporting this back to the Brown people, and finally, in the summer of '61, Clair, and Pat, and Roger Kent, and Don Bradley, and I can't remember who else--perhaps two more people--had a conference.

Gatov: I would think that Hale Champion was probably there. He was director of finance. Part of the subject was how do we improve Pat's standing with the White House? Particularly in view of what Fred Dutton keeps doing.

It was a very denigrating posture that Fred had picked out for himself, I thought--denigrating to Pat.

Chall: For what reason?

Gatov: I don't know. I never have understood. Unless it was a kind of blackmail--it's a harsh thing to say. Stanley Mosk wanted to go to the Supreme Court very badly.

Chall: The State Supreme Court?

Gatov: Yes, or the U.S. Supreme Court would have been great. He would sort of wait it out on the State Supreme Court, which was something that Pat could manage. It was no secret that Fred wanted to be appointed attorney general in Stanley's place. Whether he hoped in some way that it would become clear to Pat that if he appointed him to this then it would shut him up in Washington--I don't know. I don't understand it. I never did understand what Fred was up to--what it did for him to constantly portray Pat as a bumbling idiot who had no idea what he was doing, and was surrounded by incompetents.

Several specific items were put together at this meeting, which took place at Roger's Kentfield home one weekend. I was given these reports with the documentation of who heard what from whom. It wasn't by any means only me who'd gotten the news from the national press people. In other words, Hale Champion had called people he knew in Washington, and Don had called reporters that he knew in Washington.

All of them were corroborating the story that Fred was the source, which of course baffled them. If Pat Brown was such a great guy, why would the man who said he created him, who'd managed his campaign and been his confidential secretary and so forth--why would he do this? It's a mystery to this day.

In any case, I took all this to Larry O'Brien and told him about it, and said that it was known in California. What was the point of it? What good did it do Jack Kennedy to tear down the governor who would still be governor when he ran again in '64, probably? We weren't optimistic about Richard Nixon in those days. [Laughs] That was still to come.

Gatov: The last thing that Kennedy would want would be Nixon being the governor of California. That's no help. [Laughs] So let's do something about stopping this. Two things happened. One, the following Christmas, I think it was--I've heard this story, but I can't vouch for it, because I wasn't present. It sounds so plausible that I'm sure it was true.

Dean Rusk was secretary of state. At a cabinet meeting, the president sat on one side of the middle part of the table, and Dutton sat between him and Dean Rusk. The story that I was told goes like this: Dean Rusk leaned across Dutton to the president and said, "Mr. President, we over at State have great admiration for the cabinet secretary [Fred Dutton]. I wonder if it would be asking too much for you to release him to us. We'd like to make him--" whatever his title was.

Kennedy is supposed to have responded without blinking an eyelash, "I'm willing to make the sacrifice. When do you want him to report." [Laughs] Dutton sat there and was moved out of the White House, so to speak, without having an opportunity to say a word. Whether it was because of what I've just told you, I don't know. Maybe they had other reasons. But in any case, the O'Brien-O'Donnell axis of the White House staff was simply delighted at what they felt was quite a coup. I presume they engineered it. It would be a likely way to do it, to build him up to Dean Rusk as a great man. They were having troubles at State. They were always having troubles at State! Here's this great administrator who can straighten everything out for you! [Laughs] So you just ask the president at the next cabinet meeting! I can imagine how they did it!

In any case, Dutton was removed from the White House, which naturally limited his, one, availability to the press, and two, his ability to be "a source inside the White House who said," which was the damaging part.

The next event was that Pat Brown was invited, in January of '62, to the National Press Club to address a lunch meeting. Women, in those days, weren't admitted. Some friends of mine, women press people, knew I wanted to go, and they wanted to go. They arranged that we could sit up in the balcony and look down on this vast room full of men reporters. They took me along as their guest. We had lunch ahead of time. [Laughs] That doesn't sound fair.

Whoever the president was of the Press Club introduced Pat in a very demeaning fashion. The implication was, We've got this boob from the West Coast, who of course doesn't know anything about Washington,

Gatov: and wears socks that don't match, practically. He treated him really terribly in his introduction. I noticed that at the head table was just about everybody that I knew, at any rate, on the White House staff. They were all there.

Pat got up and spoke for thirty minutes without anything more than what looked like a card with a few items on it. He spoke very eloquently about what he was doing about the problems he was confronted with in California, which had to do with transportation, education, in-migration, jobs, water--all the things that, in those days, were very serious problems. They were the problems of rapid growth, and vastly increased consumption of everything.

When he finished--I'll never forget this--there was utter silence. The press, of course, never claps traditionally. But there was silence. You got the feeling that they were trying to pull themselves together. Finally, whoever was presiding said, "Any questions?" There was a long pause, and finally somebody put up his hand and said, "Governor, what's the price of a one-way ticket to California?" That brought down the house.

They really couldn't think of questions to ask him. He had covered it all so well and so professionally, with such evident intimate knowledge of what he was talking about, that he changed his image, for this collection of people, within half an hour. Instead of being a stupid bumbler, he became a very amiable, competent, decent, thoroughly-informed chief executive.

After that, we went over to the White House. Pat asked me to go along. As I was going down from the lunch on the stairs, I was in a squash of people, listening to their comments. Everything they said was complimentary and surprised. "I didn't realize he knew so much." "I didn't realize he was so good." "I didn't know he knew so much." It was a very, very interesting--to me, delightful--experience.

Chall: How had it happened that he had been asked? Was this something engineered?

Gatov: I presume.

Chall: You were then in Washington as the Treasurer?

Gatov: I was in Washington, yes. I don't know, but it should be no problem to get the governor of California there. He also announced that California was going to be the biggest state, or was then the biggest state, as of November. Nobody believed that. [Laughs] They asked him when it had happened that we had passed a certain number. They didn't quarrel with him, though. They were just surprised.

Gatov: So we went to the White House. We went up to the family sitting room with the president. It was a very pleasant hour. Obviously, he had been briefed by his staff, and he was full of praise and compliments to Pat, an apology in a kind of way. "I'm sorry I never had a chance to know you during the campaign. There were lots of things that I wish I had done differently during the campaign." It was a very heartwarming experience for everybody there, I think, because it did change the president's mind about him.

He had not been exposed to Pat, except early in the primary campaign. After that, he came to California several more times before he was assassinated and they always appeared together.

Chall: This particular article that we started to talk about that was in the Wall Street Journal, June 5, 1963, "Feud of Top Democrats in Golden State Could Hurt Kennedy in '64." That deals also with Mr. Unruh and the problems with Pat Brown, and the White House attempting to smooth the California frictions by seeming to back Pat. "Officials rushed him a last-minute bid to sit next to the President at the opening baseball game this spring. White House lieutenants Larry O'Brien and Pierre Salinger have avowed there's no question that Mr. Brown is California's top Democrat."

Gatov: Well, it would be in their interests, you see. That's very interesting. I may have seen it at the time. I don't recall.

Chall: Oh, you probably did. It was in your papers. I found all sorts of things. [Laughs] You clipped it for a good reason, and so they're there.

Gatov: Well, it was an effort to curb Jesse.

Thoughts on Prestige, Leadership, and Survival

Chall: The press apparently was continually aware of what was going on in California in one way or another or trying to be. Well now, you've lost your campaign. When you lose a campaign of that kind, of course, the press is always quick to pick up the fact that Brown has lost prestige, or that Gatov has lost prestige, or the CDC has lost prestige. But in reality, do you lose prestige?

Gatov: I don't know. It's hard to say. I suppose if you make enough evident mistakes, and you guess wrong often enough, that eventually you do. It's not something, really, that I ever worried too much about. My

Gatov: feeling was that a person in my position, which was a leadership position, had an obligation to people in the party to let them know where I was. I never have gone along with this business of neutrality. I think people in leadership positions ought to lead, to let people know where they stand.

I mean, if people didn't like me at all, they'd say to themselves, "If she's backing that person, I don't want to back that person." I think this much candor is very necessary. I took my positions, and I stayed with them.

Of course, nobody is that powerful in this state, even the governor. You know, Jerry Brown is riding now on an eighty percent popularity wave, and I'm sure if you were to ask three questions of anybody who said they thought that he was doing a great job, they couldn't answer three questions about what he had done. It's an aura of some sort. It can go as fast as it came.

I think it's a very fragile business. It's reputation, and that's really all it is. Reputations can be shredded very fast. It takes longer to build them up. I don't know. It's evident that Pat Brown began losing some after that. He lost the governorship in '66. But only one--Earl Warren's the only one who ever made it to a third term in California. In any case, it's really a matter of fact that a governor loses support as he does more and more things. The less he does, the fewer toes he's stepped on, the longer his popularity lasts.

But he's so close to the people--he's reported on all the time. The matter of survival is very tough. Two terms is about all they should try to handle. [Laughs]

Reelection as National Committeewoman

Chall: In the 1964 primaries there were two delegate groups, one backing Yorty [Samuel] and one backing Pat Brown. Were you a part of the committee who chose delegates for the Brown delegation?

Gatov: I expect so. I don't have any clear recollection of when it happened, or where.

Chall: I think it was probably the same way [as in former years]. Eugene Wyman helped, and Roger Kent in selecting delegates to the 1964 convention. I don't have the names of the people, except I assume that you would have been there. Now, the story seems to be that Pat Brown indicated that

Chall: those people who wouldn't back Eugene Wyman for Democratic national committeeman, would not be put on his delegation. Sam Yorty, decided therefore, to set up his own delegate slate.

Gatov: Could be. I didn't know that, because I wasn't hard to handle in that sense. I was perfectly willing to back Gene Wyman. It made my life much easier.

Chall: Backing Gene Wyman meant that one wouldn't back Carmen Warschaw?

Gatov: That's just it. Naturally, I was on the back Gene Wyman effort, which preserved the status quo, so to speak, and kept the national committeewoman's job in the north, because they wouldn't hold still for having them both in the south--since they vote on the man first.

Chall: Oh, they do?

Gatov: Or did, in those days. I don't know what they do now. [Chuckles]

Chall: I see. The woman is just sort of a throwaway?

Gatov: Somebody has to go first! [Laughs] I can't accept that it's a throwaway. Somebody has to be voted on first. I think it was correct that they do the man first, because the man, in those days, was much more of a fund raiser than the woman was expected to be. And the contest was between Wyman and Warschaw. There were no others. To this day, I don't like raising money. I've gotten better at it, but I don't like it. It's partly that I'm not in the position to give it in the amounts that I think are necessary for a successful fund raiser. You know, "I'll give a thousand dollars if you'll give a thousand dollars," but I'm not often in that position. It was, to me, not a role I could play very well.

The party needed money, and Gene Wyman was good at raising money. He had it. So it wasn't offensive to me that they voted on him first.

Chall: India Edwards says that that's the function of a national committeewoman, to raise money for the party. Is that the way you saw it, as a function? Of course, I assume from what you told me that you never did consider it your function.

Gatov: No, and nor did the people who backed me initially and kept on backing me--such as the Hellers and Bill Roth, just to mention a few--make me feel it was my function to raise money. My talents, for what they were worth, was on the administration of a campaign and organization. As somebody who was a professional remarked to me and I was delighted... A couple of years ago when I was talking about what I used to do, this

- Gatov: man, much younger than I, said, "Well, you're just a cheap pro." I was very flattered by this, because that really was the way I looked at myself. Because most of the time, I was doing things that ordinarily somebody would have been paid to do. In other words, I was saving the campaign money by doing whatever it was I was doing. Money was always hard to come by.
- Chall: In seeing other national committeewomen on the national committee, did you have the feeling that most of them were there because they were expected to raise money?
- Gatov: No. There were some there who did, who had it, I should say. I don't recall any in my particular day who were spectacular fund raisers. There were some who were speculator contributors.
- Chall: Contributors?
- Gatov: Yes. You know, women with money, or whose husbands were in oil or cattle or other things like that were in a position to be very generous, and they were.
- Chall: Well, what about this campaign for national committeewoman with Carmen Warschaw in 1964? She apparently felt that she'd had a commitment from Eugene Wyman to support her for national committeewoman, although she didn't have it in writing. I've been under the impression that once one has made a commitment, that's kept, no matter how you feel about what you've committed yourself to, six or eight months later?
- Gatov: I don't think that Gene Wyman thought he had made a commitment. I don't know why he would. If he did do that, I'm sure it was a violation. He should not have done it, and kept quiet about it. On the other hand, I can't imagine why he would make a commitment to her which was then going to result in putting both spots in southern California, and not expect some sort of backlash from the north. It would have occurred. It would make no political sense for him to have done it.
- I think that Carmen was quite capable of inferring or implying that from something that he had said, something that he really didn't say, or that he didn't think he'd said.
- Chall: Well, apparently, she felt that he had given her a commitment when she backed him for state chairman.
- Gatov: The year before I was first elected to the national committee, in '56 or '55, there was a woman named Sue Lilienthal, whom I may have mentioned before. She's now dead. She was a young protégée of Ellie Heller, and Sue and I became very good friends in an odd sort of way. She felt competitive with me, and yet fond of me. She was much more experienced than I. She'd been in politics much longer.

- Gatov: She made it plain to me that Ellie Heller had promised her the national committee spot in 1956. I don't believe that Ellie Heller ever did anything of the kind. Whatever it was she said to Sue about it made Sue feel confident of it. It's just unlike Ellie to do anything like that ahead of time, or else if she did it, she would go all the way with it. This is the only time I ever heard of anybody saying that Ellie said something and then didn't follow through. Sue died of cancer shortly thereafter. I'm sure this never occurred. People can misinterpret; it's just one person's word against another.
- Chall: Well, this was quite a campaign, with letters and telegrams and whatever. Pat Brown sent letters and telegrams to almost everyone coming, I guess.
- Gatov: To all the delegates.
- Chall: Carmen Warschaw sent letters to all the delegates. I have a copy of the letter here. This is Carmen Warschaw's letter of March 18, so that was long before the June primary.
- Gatov: Of course, there was no contest in the primary. Nobody worried about the Yorty slate.
- Chall: Pat Brown's letter came out on March 20, so that was two days later. I have a telegram, I'm sure I got it out of your papers. I don't know why you happen to have it. It was sent to Bob Coate from the congressman in Washington--Clair Engle, Harry Shepherd, Cecil King, Chet Holifield, Charles Wilson--I guess that's all of them.
- Gatov: That's all of them.
- Chall: They are urging support of Carmen Warschaw.
- Gatov: Bob probably gave it to me. Of course it was Lu Engle who signed for Clair.
- Chall: Then I have a letter that you wrote to Pat Brown at the end of that contest thanking him for his assistance. "There must have been many time," you wrote, "when you wished that the office could have been abolished" (that's national committeewoman). "That it came out the right way was due to your firm position and the truly amazing teamwork of Winslow--"
- Gatov: Christian. Winslow Christian is now a justice on the appeals court.
- Chall: What was he then?
- Gatov: He was then something-or-other in the Brown administration. I forget what his exact title was. I think it was the same job that Fred Dutton had had.

Chall: [continuing to read names from Gatov letter to Governor Brown] "Hale." That's Hale Champion. "John McDonald?"

Gatov: He was the press secretary.

Chall: "Irv Sprague?"

Gatov: Irv Sprague was staff man in Washington. He was the California lobbyist. We had a lobbyist then. I think we still do. He was it.

Chall: "Gene and Roz Wyman." We know who they are. "Roger Kent, and Don--"

Gatov: Bradley.

Chall: "Joe Cerrell." He was Stanley Mosk's assistant at that time? His A.A.? [administrative assistant]

Gatov: He was A.A. on the job of national committeeman. He wasn't Stanley's A.A. as attorney general. He was A.A. in the Democratic party office in southern California, which was comparable to the job that Don had had here.

Chall: [continuing] "Van Dempsey, and Alan Cranston, Ann Alanson, Jane Morrison, and probably several others. The whole effort was brilliantly coordinated by Nancy Sloss, who is the most competent woman I know. There was also work done by Cyril Magnin, Nancy Buell, Mary Ann Weigel, and Tom Saunders." Now, let's see. Nancy Sloss was she private secretary?

Gatov: I forget what her title was in the Brown administration. She was in his office in Sacramento--a marvelous person! She's the daughter of Mrs. Louis Sloss in San Francisco.

Chall: And Cyril Magnin; he's always around in a non-official capacity.

Gatov: Yes. He was probably a member of the delegation. And a strong Brown supporter. It became a matter of whether you were for or against Pat, you see.

Chall: And you were just a pawn?

Gatov: I was just a piece of the puzzle. It was one more chance to show whether you were on Jesse's side or Pat's side.

Chall: That's really what it was?

Gatov: That's what it was.

Chall: And so it seemed to have been from that time forward, for many years. Thus they went around urging support for Pat Brown by voting for you? Would this be what they all would do?

Gatov: Yes. Basically what they were doing was constantly telephoning; keeping records. Everybody had a list of the delegates. They would divide up who was going to call who, and I should call certain ones at certain times. Some would need Pat to call, and some would want Nancy Sloss to call. It would depend on who was supposed to be responsive to whom. This would just be an intelligent way of handling an operation like that, and I'm sure that's the way it was done.

Chall: It was a need to be continually calling the same people, or once or twice would be enough?

Gatov: I don't think it was a continuous thing, but we didn't want to lose anybody without knowing it.

Chall: Could any promises be made? What if somebody were on the fence?

Gatov: It became a matter, as far as I was concerned, of--Are you supporting the governor or not? If you think that Pat Brown has been a good governor and has served the cause of the Democratic party in California well, then I think he ought to be able to say who he would like to have be, in effect, his representatives on the national committee. It was that simple, to me.

Chall: Why would Stanley Mosk have been backing Warschaw?

Gatov: Because [laughs] this was 1964, and it goes back to that tragic Senate race situation. He was very bitter about Pat. He showed it in several ways. This was one, and the Salinger thing was another. Pat finally did appoint him to the Supreme Court. This had two effects. It got him out of the partisan arena. The other, I think, was to really soften Stanley a good deal. I think he was pleased that Pat was big enough to do it.

Pat Brown was a very big man to me. There was nothing petty about him. People would do these hideous things to him. His usual reaction was something like, "Why do you suppose they did something like that?" He was a very gentle person who had no violence in his personality. He wasn't threatening people with what he was going to do to them if they didn't do something. He was the despair of his staff, because he did not engage in any of the bare-knuckle kind of force that I think people expect governors will, either to get votes on legislation, or to get something really as low-priority as this.

Chall: This became a kind of battle. It seems to hinge, often on whether the voting is open or closed. Warschaw wanted a closed vote, and lost on that decision. The traditional open vote went out a few years later, because at that time it suited the need of the status quo.

Gatov: When was that?

Chall: 1966. It was done by a closed vote.

Gatov: I wasn't there. I'd resigned by that time. I got all the way out. I really did. Out of that kind of thing. I didn't get out of politics, I got out of party fights.

The Democratic Party Power Struggle, 1964-1966

Chall: Once you told me that nothing was done really behind the scenes, in the smoke-filled rooms, but it seems to me that there's quite a bit done behind the scenes. I don't know whether the rooms are smoke-filled. The decision during these years, about the selection of the national committeeman and the national committeewoman, seems to me to have been decided behind closed doors. Otherwise, you know, let Carmen Warschaw win.

Gatov: But why? Why let her win when she's destructive to the governor? This, as far as I was concerned, was the basic reason. I thought she treated him abominably. She had no compunctions about embarrassing him. That was the way she got her kicks, apparently. I thought it was a "bad show."

As far as the smoke-filled room was concerned, I guess maybe we have different interpretations of what that means. There was no secret about where Pat Brown's sentiments were. It wasn't that he was working quietly through other people in some sort of Machiavellian way. The decision-making process usually took place in his office, just because that was as good a place as any.

It was not a party matter, in the sense that it was not something that should be decided by the executive committee, or the state convention, something of that sort. Any three people on that delegation could get together and do exactly what we did, they'd have had a hard time putting together the necessary amount of muscle behind it that we had. But that, after all, is exactly what Carmen was doing. She had her group, and I was part of another group.

Gatov: I think, to me, a smoked-filled room implies an environment in which people are meeting to try to disrupt what would have been a natural process. What I'm debating is whether it's any more of a natural process for Carmen to have been elected than it was for me to be elected. It was an accepted posture at that time that with an incumbent governor, the members of the national committee are his selections, just as the chairman of the national committee, for instance, is the choice of the nominee of party.

For instance, McGovern, as you recall, fired Larry O'Brien and put in Jean Westwood. John Kennedy fired Paul Butler and put in "Scoop" [Henry] Jackson. He fired Katie Louchheim as vice-chairman of the national committee and put in Margaret Price.

Chall: Oh, Kennedy did that?

Gatov: It happened overnight. This was the prerogative of the chief executive. I'm just using these as examples.

Chall: That's fine, because it does look as if all these are types of machinations and it's probably just as well to spell out the difference.

Gatov: You could say that this is the wrong way to do it, but the tradition at that time was that the head of the party, whoever it happened to be--particularly if you had a governor--it was his prerogative to have who he wanted in the various party posts. Because Carmen and Jesse didn't like it--well, they opposed it and lost, that's all.

Chall: This is really a northern California-southern California battle primarily, isn't it? The drawing of sides for the next gubernatorial campaign, perhaps, or for power in the party.

Gatov: Perhaps, but Wyman was southern. In other words, the business of who should run in '66 was never satisfactorily resolved. That's why Pat ran, because he felt that there wasn't anybody else who could even come as close as he could to winning it. Most of us agreed with him. There really wasn't anybody who was willing to run.

Chall: Wouldn't Jesse Unruh have been willing to run? And if he had run at that time, was it feared that he couldn't beat whoever might be going to run in the Republican party?

Gatov: There were some of us who regarded Jesse Unruh for years as a crook and a bungler. I think my feeling was not so much that he couldn't win, although I thought he was a most unattractive candidate, as he demonstrated he was in 1970, when he did run. You can say that Reagan was too strong, and so forth. He probably was. Even so, I would not have liked to have

Gatov: had a man who used power as brutally as Jesse Unruh did, when he was Speaker, in the executive office of California. He was bad enough as Speaker, in my view, in the autocratic way he acted.

[end Tape 11, side 2; begin Tape 12, side 1]
(Interview 12, May 19, 1976)

Gatov: It goes pretty far back, certainly as far back as 1960, which was my first clear recollection of watching him do what I thought were counter-productive things, and detrimental to what I thought was the proper outcome of whatever it was. This was again at the Democratic convention of 1960. Jesse was for John Kennedy, as was I, but he was in a much more prominent role than I, because he asserted himself more than I did--making public statements and so forth.

He tended to be more conspicuous at the caucus meetings. I was sitting next to Carmen Warschaw on a particular occasion. It got quite heated. I can't recall now exactly what the cause of the problem was. A question came up that he didn't like, so Jesse simply adjourned the caucus, and didn't permit any resolution, or any further discussion. It could so well have been handled without infuriating people, which was the result that it had.

My concern was to sort of woo or win the Stevenson voters over to Kennedy, and this kind of heavy-handed abuse--which was what they thought it was--made it infinitely more difficult to go back to them later and say, "Well, never mind Jesse. Look at the candidate."

Chall: Yes, you were both on the same side, too.

Gatov: We frequently have been on the same side. That was an interesting time, too, because finally they got around to taking the delegation vote for the candidates that was going to be announced on the floor, the final vote. They took it off the floor, and Carmen's father came up to her and told her that she couldn't vote for Kennedy; she was to vote for Johnson. She didn't like that. It really upset her. I don't know if she ever says anything about that now, but anyway, that did happen.

That was the first time that I sort of disliked what Jesse was doing. Then after that, I disliked intensely his feeling that it is necessary for him to oppose Governor Pat Brown on just about anything that was crucial, and to ridicule him--make derogatory statements about him. Then when I really saw the worst of the man, I guess, was in 1968 when he was putting together and became the chairman of the Robert Kennedy delegation.

Gatov: I was to be on the delegation. They made me a vice-chairman of it. We had a headquarters pretty fast after Bobby elected to get into the California primary. It was a matter of trying to do six months work in a couple of weeks, really, to get the whole thing set up, to get the staff organized, and get going out in the counties, and so forth.

Well, I discovered that nothing could happen without Jesse's okay. He had devised, to me, an absurd method of financing the campaign. All the bills were to be sent to him. In other words, previously, counties had raised money and spent money, and kept an accounting. We would ask for accounting, so they would have to show us what they spent money on, in addition to what they sent to the headquarters.

But this was conducting a campaign on a credit card. Furthermore, nothing was happening. It was just the most strangled situation. I was by no means alone in feeling that way. Bill Orrick, who's now a federal judge, was one of those who was very distressed about it, and a number of other people. I used to talk to Bill every morning before I'd leave the house to go to headquarters.

Finally he said he was going to call Steve Smith, who was the Kennedy brother-in-law. By this time we had quite a bill of particulars, with people who would say, Yes, this was true. I couldn't get permission for instance to open headquarters in San Mateo County. The net result of that was that Steve Smith came out. By the third week in April, he had removed Jesse. He told him that he would either get out quietly, or they would publicly throw him out, because he was absolutely impossible. This is because Jesse doesn't trust anybody.

He can't delegate anything. He's so paranoid that nobody else could do anything if he's in charge.

After they got rid of Jesse, they sent John Seigenthaler out, a man who's now either an editor or publishers, (I can't remember which) of the National Tennessean, who'd been in the John Kennedy administration. Within five days, things were really rolling. Jesse considered himself the great master politician. In many ways, in a legislative body he was--or is, I suppose--but in a campaign he was not--in handling people or creating an organization.

In Maryland now, taking the trouble to go there and thumb his nose at [laughs] his now governor Jerry Brown--it says something about the man.

Chall: I guess, he has had, in all these years, a complete estrangement then from Pat Brown.

Gatov: And anybody who might be in a position stronger than his own.

Chall: But he must have had a considerable amount of influence in southern California, because that's where the break seems to be, although that may not be where it really was between the people who were battling there at one time: Carmen Warschaw versus Wyman, and Yorty versus Wyman. I'm not sure whether those were issues as such, or whether they were Pat Brown people.

Gatov: I'm glad you mentioned that. I was thinking about that the other day--that whatever it was--and I don't know what it was.... As I've said right along, I never understood what went on down there, and I really never tried to. It was healthier not to. But issues it was not. I think it's been a remarkable thing in the party in California, over a long period of years, that really with the exception of what I would call aberrations like Sam Yorty, there have been very few divisions over issues. There'll be disagreements, but really, there hasn't been any big split over ideology. I think it's been much more a matter of personalities that has been divisive. They tended to get into a cult of personalities, that was perhaps harder to handle. It doesn't go away very fast. [Laughs]

Chall: No, they have lingering meanings.

Gatov: I don't know what you've picked up from the other people you've talked to, but I really don't think that ideology has had much to do with it. There haven't been bitter battles over elimination of the death penalty, or Proposition 14, or any of these other things, that could have been divisive. I don't think we've got a conservative and a liberal constituency, though the south tends to be more conservative than the north does--at least when I was active.

Chall: I notice the press plays up conservative/liberal, from the old clippings that I see. It's probably not really meaningful, when it's talking about Manatt versus Warschaw at one time. I'm thinking about 1966. Whether that's so or not, I don't know.

Gatov: I wouldn't have thought so. That's why you have to have some tag to hang these things on. It's a power struggle.

Democratic National Convention, 1964

Chall: Well, there was something, I guess, that's related to this, in what went on at the 1964 convention, with respect to the seating of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Delegation, even within our own state delegation. As I understand it, at the delegate caucus before you all went to Atlantic City, the caucus agreed to seat the Mississippi Freedom Delegation. That was their decision. Then, of course, it was difficult to do when they all got to Atlantic City, because some compromise had to be made. It looks as if the delegation was split on that.

Gatov: Whether there should be a compromise?

Chall: Whether they should accept the compromise or not. Ultimately, they voted to accept the compromise, but it was at first on a split vote. Carmen Warschaw, and Jesse Unruh, and a few others, until the last, wanted to seat the Mississippi Freedom Delegation. But there were other people--there were blacks--who wanted to do the same. Jerome Waldie, I think, for a long time, thought it was improper to seat any delegation from Mississippi.

Gatov: Yes, I remember that, and I remember we were addressed by several of the leaders of the Freedom Democratic Party (I think that is what it was called; something like that). It was a very moving thing. There was no question in anybody's mind that their claim was totally proper. But what we had was a choice between a real explosion, with probably no resulting benefit down the line in years to come, or a compromise that the national committee agreed, as I recall, to enforce for the next convention.

As far as this convention was concerned, in 1964, it really didn't make a bit of difference. Nothing was going to be changed. It was not a matter of getting one candidate nominated versus another. It was not a matter of any particular platform fight. It was not going to make a bit of difference in the voting. My feeling, I think, as I recall it at the time, was that while totally sympathetic with the people who wanted to be seated, I felt that the long pull was more important.

If we would accept the compromise, which I think was offered, as seating two at-large--a token addition to the Mississippi delegation, then the next time, they would have to obey the rules which involved full and open participation in the delegate selection process. This to me was what the whole fight was about. I was one of the ones who accepted the compromise.

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Top State Democratic Chiefs Row Over Unruh

BY CARL GREENBERG

Times Political Writer

Mrs. Carmen H. Warschaw, vice chairman of California's Democratic Party, Thursday accused the state chairman, Roger Kent, of a "false and ill-timed attack" on Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh, who backed her for the post.

Her denunciation of Kent, with whom she exchanged congratulations less than a month ago when they were elected at Sacramento, was sparked by a story Mrs. Warschaw read in the Thursday morning Times.

The United Press International dispatch from San Francisco quoted Kent as stating Unruh (D-Inglewood) might have lost some party support by opposing President Johnson and Gov. Brown at the Democratic National Convention when he persuaded a number of California delegates to vote against a compromise on seating the predominantly-Negro Mississippi Freedom delegation.

Unruh Joins Fray

Unruh joined the fray in Sacramento a few hours later. He issued a statement that he wouldn't attack Kent in return and suggested if Kent has "any surplus of hostility" he aim it at Sen. Barry Goldwater—that the job at hand is electing President Johnson.

And, in San Francisco, Kent, describing the UPI story as "absolutely accurate," listened to Mrs. Warschaw's and Unruh's statements.

"Then, in a 'limited response,' Kent declared Thursday night:

"I have no comment to make on the attacks on me and certainly my energies will be directed totally to a successful campaign for the President and the other Democratic candidates in California."

The governor, who nominated Mrs. Warschaw, also was in San Francisco. His office in Sacramento said he would have no comment.

Mrs. Warschaw, who in party nomenclature is more often identified as the Southern California Democratic chairman, said Kent's statement could re-create a line dividing the party on a North-South basis at a time when party leaders are trying to run a unified campaign. She stated:

"I don't know what motives prompted Kent to twist events of two weeks ago into

an attack on one of our most effective Democratic leaders. Speaker Unruh, at a time in the campaign when we all have the responsibility to pull together for the election of President Johnson.

"I also fail to understand what prompted him to distort the facts and neglect to tell the whole truth about the events which occurred at the delegation caucus concerning the Mississippi delegation.

"When the compromise was presented to us, Speaker Unruh and myself, the majority of the state party officers serving on the delegation, Congressman Augustus Hawkins, Assemblyman Byron Rumford and a score of other delegates believed we should follow our consciences and the overwhelming expression voiced by delegates to California's state convention a week before and work for the seating of the Mississippi Freedom delegation.

Majority Support

"When a majority of the delegation voted to support a plan giving only two votes to the Freedom delegation (the plan supported by the President and Brown), we moved to make the vote of the delegation unanimous and it was on this note of harmony that the caucus was concluded.

"I don't know why Roger Kent wants to sound a disruptive note at this time, but I hope he will cease the unwarranted attacks so that all Democrats throughout California can work harmoniously for the Johnson-Humphrey ticket during the remaining weeks of this campaign. After all, the name of our opponent is Goldwater."

Kent was quoted in the story that exploded the fight as saying that some people in the Democratic Party "weren't exactly pleased" by Unruh's action in Atlantic City.

Chall: Was Roger Kent inclined to issue a press release from time to time that would create waves?

Gatov: Oh, yes indeed!

Chall: From the north, and the waves came back from the south?

Gatov: He very much enjoyed the role of "curmudgeon." It was something that he liked very much to do. He thought it served a useful purpose. It certainly made him feel better. You see, he felt that he was supporting the governor or the president or whoever it might be. He was throwing their "spitballs" for them.

Chall: With respect to conventions, how do you think that delegates should make decisions? Should they use their best individual judgments, or rely on state or national leaders, or follow public opinion?

Gatov: I really think they should make their best individual judgments. I think they should have adequate information and time. One unhappy thing that sometimes happens is that you get faced with an issue that has to be resolved right that minute, and you don't have an opportunity to find out what's in back of it, and who wants it, why, its ancestry, to to speak, and what the arguments are on both sides. I think that's unfortunate.

For what it's worth, that's been one of the strengths of the Democratic party in California. Unruh was absolutely right the other day. When Jerry Brown said that he was as close to a boss as anybody came in California, Unruh came back and said, "There's never been a boss in California." I think he's quite correct. I think it's been the strength of the system. There's been plenty of room for disagreement. Certainly there have been press fights, and things like this, but I think it's a much healthier thing than to have the kind of dictated delegation that they used to have, at any rate--particularly in the eastern states, where they wouldn't think of putting anybody on it who was going to have a mind of his own.

Chall: So it's possible that in a case where it's highly emotional, like the Mississippi Freedom Delegation, people might decide to vote their own consciences, even if it were against the wishes of the governor?

Gatov: There was no reason why they shouldn't do it. I don't think there's anything that I can comment further on that.

Chall: I'm just taking that as an instance that comes to mind. There are probably many others. Sometimes it looks as if that's what you're doing [voting one's conscience], when you're really not. [Laughs]

Gatov: Yes, [laughs] thank you.

Chall: Did you go to the inauguration?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: I understand that the southern Californians had their own ball, and their own places in one hotel, and the northern Californians had another one?

Gatov: Oh, yes. [Laughter]

Chall: That seems par for the course! I didn't know it happened during inaugural ceremonies.

Gatov: In the mad scramble for rooms, there weren't many hotels in Washington, at that time, at any rate. There are lots more now, but there weren't too many at that time that could take the numbers that we had. We had a thousand for the Kennedy inauguration, and I would think probably more than that for the Johnson inauguration.

Chall: That's quite a number.

Gatov: That really is, and it's just from California. Since they normally go off from different airports, via nonstop, the arrangements would be made from the northern office and the southern office; I don't think it was a matter of any particular fight--I can't recall it--as much as just a matter of convenience of handling. The inauguration office was dealing with two people, instead of just one for the state.

Chall: But the fact that they had their own ball?

Gatov: Oh, that was probably just a matter of ego. [Laughs] Anybody could go to anybody else's ball.

Chall: I understand that you were in charge as the national committeewoman for finding space at the convention itself for California delegates. That must have been rather difficult, from what I've read about that convention.

Gatov: No, it wasn't really. As I recall, there was a woman from Texas, whose name escapes me at the moment, who was working for the national committee. I went back with Nancy Sloss, who at that time was in the governor's office. We spent about a day and a half with this person, who was in charge of rooms and arrangements and so on, and made our arrangements. We told her how many people we were going to have. Again, we were so big!

- Gatov: In addition to having as large a delegation as New York, we had infinitely more relatives, children, guests, all of these people who wanted to come too. We got about the biggest hotel in the place. I think it was called the Ambassador. It was an old place, long since torn down now. Then it was at the stage of doorknobs falling off, and the showers not working, and the plumbing coming apart. It was a creaking wreck.
- Chall: Some of those little notices have been quoted in Theodore White's The Making of the President--1964. It made good copy.
- Gatov: As conventions go, it was a very relaxed convention. There was really nothing much to do. There was a valedictory night to John Kennedy narrated by Bobby, I believe. Otherwise, it was uneventful.
- Chall: Except for the seating of the Mississippi delegation.
- Gatov: I think there was some eruption from Bull Connor, too, as I recall. He ordinarily wouldn't have gotten much attention. There was nothing much to do, except lie in the sun, hunt for good restaurants.
- Chall: There were good restaurants?
- Gatov: We hunted for them, but there were very few in Atlantic City. It had a very interesting transportation system. It's a north-south city. The streets go north and south and they are only about six blocks deep, but miles long. The transportation's by mini-bus. You get on a mini-bus that holds about twelve people. It was great.
- Chall: That was the easiest way to get to the convention that you've had?
- Gatov: Yes, it was an excellent transportation system.

IX A CHANGE IN VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY, 1965-1976

Resignation as National Committeewoman, 1965

- Chall: Now we come to 1965, the most exciting portion of which is your resignation. Why, really, did you resign? I know that your husband was made a member of the Public Utilities Commission, and I know that looked to the press for a moment as maybe the reason, but that wasn't the reason that you gave.
- Gatov: [Laughs] No.
- Chall: Nor did it make much sense, that it would be the reason. In your speech on the occasion of your resignation, you said that you needed free time for your family, free time for some personal activities, and for the business that you were apparently already in.
- Gatov: I think that was the First Federal Savings and Loan, San Rafael, of which I was a founding director and a vice-president. I was also doing the publicity for it. We couldn't afford anybody to do advertising in those days. So I was doing ads and community relations, and it was a busy time.
- Chall: And the other one was that you might have possibly a weekly radio program, or wanted to write a book.
- Gatov: Well, that's right. We started a book. The man who's the dean of Armstrong College now, and I.
- Chall: Who is he?
- Gatov: His name is Bill Shear, Dr. William S. Shear. I had met him earlier, about a year earlier, when we were on our way to Japan. My husband was on the North Pacific International Fisheries Commission, which was a delightful appointment from President Kennedy. It took us twice to Japan in two years. This was the second trip.

Gatov: We stopped in Anchorage on our way, because one of the commissioners was the president of Alaska Methodist University, which was in Anchorage. This was shortly after the '64 election in November. He asked me if I would talk to the student body about politics in California. Then this political science professor [Shear] asked me if I would meet with his class, so I met with his class. We corresponded back and forth, and pretty soon he came down here. We decided that we would write a book together on local campaigns.

He had run successfully for a local office in Anchorage. I had earlier--we haven't discussed this much--been involved in local campaigns--several assembly campaigns, and some for supervisors.

These candidates usually can't afford the money to hire a campaign manager. Generally, it's their first time out. This is where they are beginning. They don't know anything about campaigns, and nor does anybody else around them usually. They don't have anyplace to go, especially if it's a non-partisan campaign, like school board, or hospital board, or something like that.

So we thought we'd write a book together on campaign techniques for local candidates. We got fairly far along in it, then he went off and began doing another thing. I got diverted, so we still haven't written the book. [Laughs]

Chall: Well, the A.A.U.W. has written such a handbook.*

Gatov: On the local campaign? Oh, good.

Chall: I haven't seen it, but I've heard about it and I've read about it. I know somebody who recently ran his own campaign, and he said it was the first thing he got hold of.

Gatov: Great. I'm delighted to hear that, because it really is a necessary thing.

There were no subtle reasons for resigning. I had really been in it long enough. Ten years is a very long time for that kind of involvement--the phone rings all the time. I felt that I had to go to all these meetings. Usually they took place on weekends. At the time

*This one and a list of others are in AAUW Journal, Vol. 69, No. 3, November, 1975, pp. 9-10. More have been published since that date.

Gatov: that Al and I were married, his oldest daughter was away from home at school, but his youngest daughter was only eleven and she was living with us, and was finishing up elementary school and going to high school. She had problems at different times.

I was really very happy to sort of "pass the baton," particularly to Ann Eliaser, with whom I'd worked over the years. She had more energy, loved to raise money, and was full of excitement about what all she could do. She and the governor got along very well. It was just a matter of figuring out a way to make the transition so that it wasn't going to be upset by any "intervening" powers.

I figured out a way to do it. I talked to the governor about it, naturally, first, and he thought that was just fine. We had a scheduled meeting coming up. The executive committee of the state central committee which would fill the vacancy meets alternately north and south. I waited until there was to be a meeting in the north, in Sacramento, knowing that the congressmen would undoubtedly be supporting Carmen, or want to, because she was very generous to them, as were her father and her husband. That was sort of her base--the members of Congress. Especially from southern California.

I finally thought of a device, which was to write them a letter, date it Monday, and mail it Monday, so it would be postmarked Monday before the meeting. In those days, airmail was a different procedure than regular first class. You had to put an airmail stamp on it, if it was going to go airmail. So I just neglected to put an airmail stamp on it, just put a regular first-class stamp on it, and was pretty sure that it wouldn't get to Washington until about Friday. The meeting was Saturday.

That's exactly what happened. [Laughs] So, it just all went very well. Carmen was furious.

Chall: I wasn't sure that she wanted the position herself.

Gatov: Well, I just didn't want to take the risk of finding out.

Chall: I think, when she got word of it, that she wanted the meeting postponed for a month, so that Trudy Owens could be put into competition. I guess that would have been southern California. You didn't want both the spots to be in southern California.

Gatov: Why upset something that really, for all practical purposes, was working quite well? Gene Wyman was doing a good job down there. If he'd had a counterpart, another member of the national committee down there, it would have made the fights even worse, because they each would have been operating from an equal power base.

Chall: So you picked Ann Alanson [Eliaser]?

Gatov: Yes, we talked it over with Pat Brown; Ann wanted it; she was willing to do it. Pat Brown really wanted to change both top spots in northern California.

Chall: At that time, or some time during the year?

Gatov: Some time around then. I can't remember now when Roger resigned, but I think it was in the spring.

Chall: He says it was at the fall meeting of '65. Yours was in the spring, in March of '65.

Gatov: That's probably about right. Roger didn't like to raise money in the first place. In the second place, Pat, I think, just wanted some new talent in and why not. Goodness, we'd both been there a long, long time.

Chall: He was facing what looked to be a difficult third-term campaign.

Gatov: The first person he wanted was Jerry Marcus, who declined to take it.

Chall: Who's he?

Gatov: He's an attorney in San Francisco, Jewish--this was another part. The Jewish community normally is very generous to the Democrats. Ann was a direct lead into that, and so was Jerry Marcus. I think Pat was hoping that with the two of them, he would be able to raise more money than he had in the past in the Jewish community, who were always generous to him.

Anyway, that didn't work. The next person was Bob Coate, who had been very effective at fund raising, and had brought a lot of new people into the party. This was another factor that I certainly felt. I had brought everybody into the party that I was going to bring in. The people that I knew that I could involve, I had already involved some years back--people like Becky Watkin and Nancy Jewel, Nancy Swadesh, and Ann.

You run out of gas, so to speak. Your usefulness really is gone after awhile. I knew that Pat wanted to replace Roger, but he hadn't said anything to him. I didn't say anything to him naturally. I don't know how that was handled. I'm sure Roger will tell you, but I didn't discuss it with him.

Gatov: At the time, somebody just told me that it was going to happen, and I was not surprised.

Chall: Who made the decision about picking Bob Coate? How was that done?

Gatov: That was done in consultation. I know Don Bradley was part of it, and possibly Roger himself. It was certainly Roger who had been instrumental in picking Bob in the first place. Probably he was among those who recommended Bob because Bob was awfully good.

Chall: He was the treasurer at that time, wasn't he? Northern California treasurer?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Is being head of the state committee a job that requires some independent income? Coate certainly had not much of an income that would allow him to function if he needed it.

Gatov: No. I would say if you don't have an independent income, you have to have some other source of funds. In his case, I'm sure he raised it, which he did with extraordinarily successful events. I remember one that he put on for Pat Brown which produced pledges of \$300,000, which in northern California in those days was absolutely unheard-of.

He could do this because of his ability to bring in people who were in their forties, who were in promising situations--the young lawyers, the architects and many others--who had never taken an active role before. He put together groups, and called them different names, "The Chairman's Circle," and this sort of thing. You'd pay \$100 a year to belong to this magic group. You'd get invited to pay to come to a lunch to listen to the various senators or governors who might be going through. He was innovative, creative, and stimulating. I'm sure that the party paid his travel expenses, because as you said, he didn't have much money.

What he raised was so much in excess of what Roger had been raising, and certainly what I had been raising. Fund raising was not something that I've ever done well. I think it was a very necessary thing. Campaigns were getting infinitely more expensive, as television became more and more the accepted weapon.

Chall: Did you drop out of politics, at least out of insiders' politics?

Gatov: Yes, I think so. That is, I stopped going to any more meetings of the executive committee, which was where party matters were sorted out pretty well. I had some sort of title--I forget what--in the Johnson

Gatov: campaign in '64. In '66, I was a northern cochairman for Pat Brown. In '68, I was northern coordinator for Cranston. This was still going into the office over a time, trying to get it set up, and this sort of thing.

Chall: Which you'd always done.

Gatov: Which I'd always done. I didn't stop really doing that until fairly recently. In '68, I was a vice-chairman of Bob Kennedy's campaign. In '70, I was state cochairman with Warren Christopher for Tunney. In '72, after trying to start a campaign for John Lindsay in California--he withdrew--I eventually got into the McGovern campaign with Bill Roth as northern cochairman.

I became increasingly inactive--became more and more titular, just going to events and things, and not any longer going in to the office all the time.

Some Reflections on a Decade of Northern California Party Relationships

Chall: Was it a relief, in a sense, not to be in the middle of the controversies and the contentions? Or even the hard work of the campaign?

Gatov: I was going to say that it's more the hard work. It may sound strange, but the contentions really didn't bother me, because there was a group who were very solid in the northern office. The CDC shared the office also. It was a remarkably harmonious place, normally, in which to work. We didn't really have problems among ourselves. It was "us" in the north and "they" in the south, an unhealthy situation, I agree, but that was the way it was.

The fact that Carmen would let go a blast really didn't bother any of us very much. Then the L.A. Times would call up for a comment [laughs] and it just seemed like a waste of time to argue with her. We were much more intent on getting on with the thing. We were usually sort of en masse after the first governor's campaign into the second governor's campaign. Of course, we split here over Cranston-Salinger in '64, and after that I was out.

Chall: Of course the Vietnam War....

Gatov: That must have been very difficult. I'm very glad I wasn't involved at that time.

Libby Gatov out of the spotlight, still busy

By BETH ASHLEY

Elizabeth (Libby) Smith Gatov of Kentfield, for 10 years Democratic National Committeewoman from California and treasurer of the United States in the exciting Kennedy years, willingly gave up her last political title 10 years ago, but she's far from retired.

She's public affairs chairman for the national Planned Parenthood organization, is teaching two college classes in American government, is recording her political memoirs for the Bancroft Library at the University of California, and still answers questions like "Who do you think should run?" from the state's political power brokers.

SHE LOOKS BACK over the years — she's 64 now — and says. "I've loved it all. I have no desire to have lived at any other time, or to be anybody else. I'm a very happy person."

She is also delighted that "everything I've done in the past seems to weave right into the things I'm doing now."

It was an incident during her student days at Smith College that led her into Planned Parenthood, an organization that an unmarried classmate became pregnant, and tried to find someone to give her an abortion. When she failed, she committed suicide.

"I asked myself why was it this girl was so overwhelmed by her situation, a situation she could do nothing to change."

SUCH THOUGHTS led Mrs. Gatov into the political action field and ultimately into Planned Parenthood. She's been trying to "change the situation" ever since.

"The condition of women and children has interested me for years. I watched women who have led sort of aimless lives, who didn't know what to do with themselves other than to raise a family, whose husbands didn't approve of their being active outside the home . . .

"I certainly felt that women should be responsible for husband and home, but with all the modern devices, I never could spend more than two hours a day at it, at least with my fashion of housekeeping.

"People had children because it was expected of them, not because they wanted them.

"I was delighted to see the change that began to creep into people's thinking, particularly with the advent of the pill. The pressures (on women) were diminishing, and I thought that was a positive thing."

AS CHAIRMAN of public affairs for Planned Parenthood, she is in charge of stimulating action groups within each state organization "to educate the decision makers, the legislators." Her branch assembles data on the numbers of teen-age pregnancies and rates of venereal disease, the costs of having illegitimate children versus the costs of abortion and contraceptives. "We point out the ongoing costs of unwanted children," she said.

Mrs. Gatov is excited to see women beginning to take their place in politics, "delighted" that women are finding the freedom to make choices about what to do with their

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lives.

She made her choices at a time when few women could bank on a career in the highest reaches of national politics.

BORN IN MONTREAL, Canada, of American parents, she did not live in the United States until attending boarding school at Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., later attending Smith College in Massachusetts and University of Michigan. Her first impressions of this country have stayed with her always: "There is nothing like the freedom, the assumption of innocence, I guess, that I found in the United States." She was "terribly exhilarated" at her first course in American history.

She was graduated in Far Eastern history, and decided to go on to law school. "The dean of the law school at University of Michigan dissuaded me. He said, 'that's ridiculous. You aren't the kind of person who wants to spend her life in the stacks doing someone else's research for him. It would be stultifying.' I thought he was probably correct — that that's what a woman would end up doing. I wish now I had gone ahead."

Mrs. Gatov's life between college and her first fling in politics, in 1948, gave no indication of her future. She had been married twice: her first husband, Frank McClure, died in a polo accident; her second was Frederick H. Smith IV, with whom she moved to California during World War II. She worked with the Junior League, Sunny Hills, the Tuberculosis Association, and the Red Cross, and helped found the Ross Valley Shop in Kentfield.

IN 1948, she helped with the Congressional campaign of her Kent Woodlands neighbor, Roger Kent. It was then she learned that "ultimately everything that's important and lasting, if it has any social impact, gets into the political field . . ."

Kent lost the campaign. Mrs. Smith took a job on the Independent-Journal, as assistant to then society editor Florence Donnelly. Later she edited the Marin Magazine.

She resigned to help Kent with his 1950 campaign. So ignited was she by now, she sought to return to school for a political science degree with hopes of teaching. Again, she was advised against it by the head of the department at University of California: "He asked me, 'Did you notice the names of the professors on their doors as you came in?' The names were all men."

She was offered an internship with the Coro Foundation, studying politics and government, and she took it.

BY 1953, seeing the Democratic party in disarray after the 1952 elections, she decided to take a year off to volunteer her services to the party. "It has never quite ended," she said.

She was chairman of the Marin Democratic Council and a director of the First Congressional District for the California Democratic Council. In 1956 she was named Democratic National Committeewoman for California.

She became acquainted with all the top figures on the political scene. She had worked hard for the election of President Kennedy: "I visited Washington frequently between 1956 and 1960, and had been on the arrangements committee for the 1960 convention. I saw a great deal of him, sat with him at dinner. Somehow we always ended up at the Kennedys' for cocktails. I was very impressed. I was very much for him."

Still, the phone call asking her to be treasurer of the United States was "a tremendous shock. (Senator) Clair Engle called me, said he and Pat Brown had been at Kennedy's house with a list of people. 'We read on down the list and nothing happened,' Engle said. 'When we got to your name, Kennedy stood up and said, "That's a hell of a good idea." And so they offered me the job."

BY NOW divorced from Smith, she consulted with her high school senior son, Daniel; they agreed she should accept the job.

"I was in the right place at the right time," she said. Unlike many women, "I could pack up and move."

The two years as treasurer were marked by thousands of miles of travel. "I was asked to speak by the most remarkable diversity of groups — many banking groups, who mistakenly thought that the treasurer had something

to do with banking. I visited El Paso, Helena, Bellingham, Peoria . . . the middle-sized cities. I met the most marvelous people. They were so genuine. I'd never been pessimistic about the character of the American people, but these trips reinforced a basic feeling about their decency."

Her duties, she said, were largely ceremonial. The treasurer's office serves as the banker for the government, issuing and destroying all the currency.

She has a letter from the Comptroller General of the United States, informing her that the total dollar accountability of the Treasurer's Office as of her departure was \$76,187,733,608.75. The letter is framed.

SHE RESIGNED the office to get married. "A lot of women thought I was letting them down," she said. She had met Albert W. Gatov in Kentfield. He had served in Washington as chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission during the last years of the Truman administration, "and people asked me, 'Why doesn't he come to Washington?' I couldn't imagine him settling down in Washington as the treasurer's husband. We never even discussed it." They were married in Kentfield in 1962.

The marriage has turned out to be "remarkably harmonious," she said. "Al and I were very wary — we are both quite independent people, fairly strong minded, and we had been following our own individual paths. I feared we might have a lot of adjusting to do.

"But it's been an absolute breeze. I really marvel at the life we have."

They have maintained a second home in Bolinas for 10 years, both like to travel but enjoy home more, and both have enjoyed a wide network of mutual friends with whom

they have shared their social lives.

BUT BOTH are busy. Gatov is the Marin representative to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and is a consultant in a number of fields affecting industry. Mrs. Gatov teaches two classes at Armstrong College in Berkeley, to a wide mix of students: one is American Government, the other Political Action, and she has her students out in the field, observing and reporting on government agencies. She spends a day a week setting down her recollections on tape for the Bancroft Library. Planned Parenthood takes her to New York several times a year. And in her Kentfield

home she is sorting through her papers — "they want everything I have" — for the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library.

But politics is still there in the forefront. She's "enormously hopeful" about the state of the nation, feels that the public cleansing of Watergate has strengthened its democratic institutions. She disagrees with skeptics who say there are only mediocrities in the large field of announced Democratic candidates. (She is supporting Arizona Congressman Morris Udall.) She feels that the coming campaign will be a time of choice — with the activities of the CIA and FBI under public scrutiny for the first time, with the \$100 billion plus Defense Department budget on a collision course with social programs, "a year from now we will have chosen a path. We're going to have a free choice in 1976 of which way we're going to go.

"We haven't had such a choice since 1960."

A phone ring interrupted her discourse. The caller was asking political advice.

The phone still rings often in her Kentfield home. And 10 years after she "left" politics, the questions to Libby Gatov are still, "Who do you think should run?"

Chall: There's a woman running for office in the Twelfth Assembly District here, on the Berkeley side of the bay--Barbara McNab. She has said that the real process of selecting political leaders in California has come to resemble a college of cardinals. "Each generation of leadership is selected by a previous generation. My goal is to break that chain."

Gatov: Well, good for her! [Laughs] The only complaints that I've been hearing lately are that the party is now run by the legislature. This is resented a good deal, apparently. I must say, in our day we felt that there shouldn't be a conflict, that the legislature needn't worry about running the party. Our job was to get more legislators elected. I think it is true that as time has gone on, the legislature has taken over the responsibility for raising money to elect more legislators. That has just removed that function from the party itself.

That's one of the things that we used to do, particularly. We were good at putting on special elections. We could raise a lot of money for one single campaign, and put all the talents we had into it. It worked very well. But that has changed. I think that Jesse partly changed it, and Leo McCarthy is certainly continuing those changes.

Chall: But the strengthened legislature is something that Californians all worked for--having a strong legislature with year-round session.

Gatov: And adequate pay.

Chall: Exactly, and money for staff.

Gatov: Yes, and money to put in their campaigns. That certainly has changed the role of the party. But I think Chuck Manatt managed to get along with the legislature quite well.

Chall: But nobody in the party has worked the way that you and Roger Kent did.

Gatov: I think that Chuck does. It would be my guess that he does, along with his law practice. He's got a pretty political law firm. I know he works very hard at it.

Chall: It was said--I suspect by Roger Kent--that in your way of working within the party, that you were "soft, sensitive, considerate, and could smooth out the rough differences when I"--I'm sure that's Roger Kent--"get mad. If anyone has what it takes to make a number of people mad and get away with it, it's Libby." [Laughter]

Gatov: That's very sweet.

Chall: That comes right out of a press release. I'm sure you've probably forgotten it.

Gatov: We worked in tandem really quite well. I think it was beneficial to the party, though I'm sure it irritated a lot of people, that instead of representing two different points of view, we represented essentially the same point of view. Geographically, we were from the same area, which really helped a lot, because Roger would go by my house on his way to the office in the morning if something had happened since the last time we'd talk about whatever it was. He'd stop by and have a cup of coffee, and we'd talk about whatever might be new. We'd come to some conclusion, and then the day would go on. I'd go to the office, and he'd go to his office, and then he'd go to the office of Democratic headquarters late in the afternoon. By that time, I was gone.

Chall: What about meetings, or press releases, or whatever he might do that made people angry. Was this just a role that you assumed?

Gatov: Well, we would talk about things. As I keep mentioning, there was always Don Bradley around--the executive secretary. I can't recall any formal procedure that we used. I don't recall, either, picking up a paper and saying, "My heavens! What do you suppose produced that?" [Laughs] So I guess I must have known.

Chall: So you don't really know why he said, "If anybody has what it takes to make people mad and get away with it, it's Libby"?

Gatov: I don't know what he's referring to. I don't know the date.

Chall: I think this was about that time that you became Treasurer, and people were providing accolades. It was also about the time that you resigned. I think I picked this up at two different times. I think the party leader quoted was always Roger Kent. I think one time the statement was attributed to him, so I wondered what he had in mind.

Gatov: Maybe he was referring to the resignation which certainly made the congressmen furious, and properly. I don't blame them, but I was weighing--did I want them mad ahead of time or later? I preferred later. [Laughs]

Chall: In terms of your picking Ann Eliaser, and picking Bob Coate--I was thinking of that in respect to what Barbara McNab had said in that each generation is selected by the previous generation.

[end Tape 12, side 1; begin Tape 12, side 2]

Chall: You were telling me about how you picked leaders.

Gatov: Van Dempsey--I can't minimize either. I don't want to in any way. He was absolutely invaluable. I said earlier that this was a cult of personality. I think this was truer even than I knew at the time I said that. Roger and I had very strong personal relationships. We knew and were responsible for an awful lot of people who were on the executive committee, for example, of the state central committee.

In other words, we quite probably had encouraged quite a few people to run, first of all, for the county committee of the county in which they lived, then to run for chairman of it. They were people who seemed to be active and interested in what was going on.

Van was constantly traveling around the countryside. He didn't like the cities, but the countryside he loved. He had an enormously devoted following of people who'd do anything Van Dempsey told them to. With this network of relationships, all it really took was getting on the telephone--say, four or five of us--Roger, Van, Don, myself, and perhaps one other person, Bob Coate or Martin Huff, when he was the treasurer who preceded Bob Coate.

They'd say, for example, that Libby was going to resign as national committeewoman, and what would they think of supporting Ann Eliaser? Usually they would say, "Fine!" "So, okay. It's going to happen on Saturday, but we'd just as soon you didn't say anything about it." That was the way it was done. It was done through personal relationships. It worked very well.

She's [Barbara McNab] right, that one generation picks the next. Once she gets into a situation like that, I think she'll understand why. When you put an awful lot of energy and effort and what talents you have into doing a job, you'd like to see it continued. It's a very human sort of protectiveness.

Thoughts on Resolving Social and Political Issues

Chall: Some social scientists are asking these questions of people in politics, and I thought that I would ask you a few of them:

How do you think that major policy questions are decided between elections? Are the decisions made by people through their elected representatives, or by a number of major groups, including elected officials, whose decisions are usually compromises in the face of conflicting or divergent interests; or by powerful groups who dominate a number of specific policy areas?

Gatov: First of all, it would depend on the nature of the question, whether it had anything to do with legislation or whether it was something as massive as ending the war in Vietnam. These are very different kinds of things--are we going to vote for the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment bill, or do we want to end a war? So the decisions will be made in very different ways. I don't think it's possible to say that there is any one way. I think that compromise is the most common way in a legislative matter. It's certainly the speediest, and gets you the most support over the long pull, usually. If it's something that can be compromised without being altogether lost.

For instance, now they're debating the three legislative bills that deal with nuclear energy. One side is complaining that they've been so compromised that they're useless. Well, I don't know what's in them, but this is certainly one way.

Another way is the decision regarding oil that has been apparently spontaneous in 1976, of most of the leading candidates for president, and certainly Senator Tunney. I don't know about Cranston, I haven't heard him on the subject. But all but Carter, I think, and Wallace [George] have come out one way or the other for the breaking up of the oil monopolies.

Maybe this just was a spontaneous notion that occurred to all of them simultaneously in '76, or maybe it wasn't. I think like any group of people--they read the papers, they watch the news, they have particularly bright, sensitive staff people around them--so officeholders are probably the first to pick up the vibrations that are going on. This would be my guess, of those that I know.

I don't think people like me were ever, really, in decision-making situations, other than the party decisions, which may be important. In other words, we gave pushes to such concepts as child-care centers, recognition of China, years ago when it was not a very popular thing to say. I don't recall us getting much into women's liberation or matters of that sort. We certainly were strong on civil rights, all the way through the time that I was involved. We were very strong for what became Medicare. But these were issues that had been around for thirty years before they finally became programs that were functioning nationally.

Minimum wage laws--things of those sorts--we would pass resolutions on. Candidates in California, by and large, were supporting these particular issues. I don't recall any real "skull sessions," so to speak, on them. I don't remember three people sitting down in a room and saying, "Well, now, this is what we're going to put in there."

Chall: You did do something about China, of course, with Senator Engle.

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: But probably you weren't powerful groups as such.

Gatov: No. That was an economic matter, much more than an ideological matter. It started as an ideological matter. As far as I was concerned, it was. I thought it was insane that we could ignore one-sixth of the globe and pretend it wasn't there. Then it turned it into an economic issue.

Chall: That made it more palatable.

Gatov: Yes, much. So I can't answer that question.

The Role of the Political Party

Chall: Maybe it can't be answered. Then they ask about the role of the political party simply: Is it to reconcile different interests rather than take clear-cut stands on issues?

Gatov: I would say it has some of both. In our country, both parties are coalitions. Depending on the growth and power of one piece of the coalition in one party is where the locus of strength sits. For instance, in California, I've watched the age of Earl Warren move into the age of Ronald Reagan. In other words, the Warren-type Republican used to be the most prevalent, and the Republican party was pretty close to even, in numbers, in those days to the Democratic party.

The kind of Republicans--I call them now liberal Republicans--would get along very easily with most of the Democrats. There were not very serious splits. The Republicans kept on winning elections. In my view, things started to shift to the right, strongly, with the emergence of Knowland and Nixon, and the Republicans began losing elections, because they kept nominating the most right-wing of various candidates who were running for the nomination. I thought that was not very good politics.

The same thing happened in our party, as a result of the '72 primary that came up with George McGovern. I don't want to designate him any particular place, but he had a curious inability to explain his positions so that they made any economic sense. So we were perceived as having moved way to the left, and so we lost.

I think it is axiomatic that the candidate of the party that can embrace, somehow, the middle, along with his own spectrum, his own base, is going to be the winner. I don't think I recall now your question exactly.

Chall: Whether the role of the political party is to reconcile different interests, rather than to take a clear-cut stand on the issues.

Gatov: I would say it is to reconcile different interests. Then you finally emerge with a clear-cut stand! Just as, for instance, the Democratic platform committees hearings right now, are emphasizing very heavily the economy and jobs. You could have predicted that a year ago. Then you began to wonder whether the improvement in the economy was going to make a difference in that. Well, apparently it hasn't. I would say that the consensus of the Democrats in office, as well as those aspiring, and part of the party machinery, have come to the conclusion that that's the winning issue.

The purpose of the party is to win elections. It's not a religion.

Chall: Finally, where is the party's activity done? In the central party machinery, among officeholders, or local leaders and the rank and file?

Gatov: Well, I think that changes, too, from time to time. The party is only as strong as the public acceptance that it gets, I think. It gets acceptance in a variety of ways. The least of which is from party leaders, who periodically make pronouncements, or say that this is going to happen, or something. In a direct sense, the party leaders can be very effective in doing, for instance, what Bob Coate did so well, which was to bring V.I.P.s to California and put on fund-raising events for them to enrich the party and candidates. Finally, the whole parade, the whole galaxy of Democratic stars had been through the state. They were getting a tremendous amount of media attention, and basically were not in disagreement with each other. They were sending out the message, and depending on the way it was done, and the response to it, they were building up the party.

The party was really an instrument, more than any other kind of force. It's not a force in itself is what I'm trying to say, but not very well.

Chall: Local leaders and rank and file--they have their place, I suppose. How are they used by the central party machinery?

Gatov: There's been a decreasing amount of use of people, it seems to me, certainly over the last ten years. And particularly in the last five years. There seem to me to be fewer precinct workers, and fewer people getting out mailings. In other words, the kinds of activities that used to have a kind of group therapy are being done by the computer, and mass mail. There are telephone banks still going on, but that's not a very enjoyable activity. You're talking to somebody strange,

Gatov: instead of somebody that you might be working with. So I think, to a certain extent, there's been a breakdown in the amount of fun that people get out of political action. I don't think there's been a total disappearance of it.

The fund-raising aspect of it is probably more crucial now than it's ever been. People are getting more and more ingenious about how they raise money--with house tours, and moveable feasts, so that you have cocktails at one house, the entree at another, and dessert and brandy at another one--this kind of thing. [Laughs]

Plus the direct-mail approach for money, which has been the most effective, plus concerts and all that all professionally done. So that this is all changing.

Chall: As the party is removed from the average man in the street, this may make him even more uncertain about what it means than it used to. I don't know whether it means anything, but it seems to be meaning something.

Gatov: Broder [David]--what's his first name?--the Washington Post columnist, wrote a book about the deterioration of the party structure--The Party's Over. It came out four or five years ago. I think he was right that the party used to have a bigger role to play, and it was the source through which the message came. The local chairman would say to the local press, "I am supporting Harry Truman because--" and people would read it. Or it may have been William Jennings Bryan.

Today nobody cares whether the local chairman is supporting Jimmy Carter or Mo Udall or Jerry Brown, because they can get all the information they want on these people through television, and then incidentally from the papers. So these functions have changed greatly.

A problem seems to be emerging in states that require party registration. California has about ten percent, presently, as "decline to state," which would be the equivalent of the independents in some other states.

I understand that in states like Massachusetts, which also requires party registration, there are more independents or "decline to state" than there are, combined, Republicans and Democrats, even though they have closed primaries! How do you function in an open primary? There are four or five states now, including Michigan, and Wisconsin, and Texas, where cross-over is permitted.

I can't imagine how you get along. For instance, in Michigan, there is no party registration. You just go in and ask, apparently, for a Republican or a Democratic ballot. What do you do when you want to

Gatov: get out a mailing, for instance, with the costs of mail what they are today? How do you know where the Democrats are? [Laughs] Things are rather simpler here than they are in some other places.

We do seem to have a surprisingly high party identification, [in California] if those figures that I've given you are correct about Massachusetts. I think that's pretty generally true throughout the East. I think an increasing number of young people are resistant to the idea of signing up with a party when they register to vote. They feel that it infringes on their freedom of choice.

I don't look at it that way. I don't see how you can even have a semblance of a political party unless people are willing to make a choice, because they can always change it if they don't like it. I certainly don't like the idea of an open primary, where people, for a variety of reasons, none of them very good, probably, are coming in to louse up "my" primary! [Laughs] Like the Wallace voters have been nominating Reagan since the Florida primary.

Vice-President: First Federal Savings and Loan Association

Chall: I wanted to find out something about your last few years. Tell me how you became the officer of a bank, and what your functions were.

Gatov: There's no way laudable reason, I'm afraid. Shortly before Al and I were to be married, I'd come home and was trying to get the house more or less in order. I was contacted by the man who had been my attorney-- Dave Friedenrich, who lives in Palo Alto--and who, with his wife Edith, I had met in 1953 at the founding meeting at CDC--way back at Asilomar.

They made quite a dent in my recollections. At that conference, we were sitting around having a drink in a room with two beds in it and one lightbulb hanging down by a string! I remember somebody in this group turning to Dave and Edith, whom I'd never seen before, and saying, "What are you doing here?" They said, "Well, you know, some people like to play golf, and some people like to play bridge, and we like to go to political conventions." [Laughs]

We became very good friends. When I needed an attorney for my divorce in 1958, I called on Dave who handled it for me. I really hadn't seen him very much in the interval [after 1958]. He phoned this April day, as I recall, in '62, to ask me if I knew a man named Harold Elberg. I said no, I didn't. He said, "I would like to bring him over to call on you this afternoon. There's something we'd like to talk to you about."

Gatov: I said, "All right. Fine." I remember looking around the room, which was a hopeless mess, and deciding not to do anything with it but to clean myself up.

They arrived. Harold was a man who must be near my age, within two or three years, but he was a very young-looking forty-eight or forty-nine at that time. He had finished several years being very successful in the plastic business and he decided that he wanted to open a savings and loan and go into the banking business. He'd taken a couple of courses in how you operate savings and loans. Dave Friedenrich was an old college classmate of his, or at least a friend of his from college.

They'd been talking about who do you know? One of them--I presume Dave--had probably said, 'Well since we're going after a federal charter, and she's just left the Treasury, I wouldn't think it would hurt a bit.' [Laughs] I'm sure that this was the way it went, but I've not asked anybody. It's the only thing that makes any sense.

The way the thing worked--I don't know whether this is usual or not--Dave was designated our attorney. Harold and I, then picked the next board member, and then the three would pick the next member, and so forth. We came up with a board of nine, who represented, really, quite a cross-section in the community.

Chall: This was your community? This was San Rafael?

Gatov: Marin County, yes. Mostly San Rafael. There were two other groups forming who were also after federal charters. I don't know why they didn't go for state charters, but they didn't. Harold had never been to Washington before. He went back to make the application, and he fell in love with all the eagles! [Laughs] He kept seeing them in offices and buildings and so on.

They made the application. I was not there, but I was told that when he was reciting who the board members were, and he got to my name, somebody obligingly filled it in, and said, "Oh, she's just resigned as treasurer of the United States." So I guess it didn't hurt anything.

Anyhow, they got the charter. Our home office is full of eagles! [Laughs] We became the most Federal! Even our notepaper has eagles on it.

Chall: First Federal Savings and Loan Association--

Gatov: --of San Rafael. It's now got five branches.

Chall: Oh, that was the first one.

Gatov: This was the founding group and San Rafael is the home office. It's only thirteen years old. We're up to \$30 million, and we have five branches, and people are pouring their money in. It wasn't always like that.

Chall: The first few years were not? Are you a stockholder in this institution?

Gatov: No. There are no stockholders in a federally chartered association as there are in the state chartered ones. We raised pledges of deposits instead of selling stock.

Well, we grew, but we grew at a snail's pace. There were two very serious dips when we had money going out faster than it was coming in, which is a very upsetting feeling.

Chall: What have you done?

Gatov: I had two responsibilities, initially. One was community affairs. Community relations is a better way to put it. The other was straight advertising. I used to work on the Independent-Journal, and that was the major paper in town, so the head of the advertising department and I would get together every week and dream up ads. [Laughs] He was very good, and very cooperative. Anyhow, that's what I did, I guess, for three or four years.

Then I got involved again in such things as the board of a local Planned Parenthood in Marin County, and I was on the advisory committee for legislation for Dominican College.

Chall: What kind of legislation are they concerned about?

Gatov: They were concerned with anything that was going to interfere with the funding of Catholic institutions, or private colleges, which they like to be considered to be. There haven't been, as a matter of fact, any problems in recent years that I can recall, that they have called up to ask some advice about--whether they should do this or that.

Mostly, it was such things in the past as subsidized bus service, for instance. Should public funds be used for buses to parochial schools? I was sympathetic to their point of view, because my feeling was that I would do almost anything to keep more children out of public schools where my children were, [laughs] which were crowded enough! If other people were willing to pay most of the freight to have their children go to another school, I wouldn't mind a little bit of help to them in some fashion or other.

Gatov: Sister Samuel, who is head of it, had been involved with the secondary school when my daughter went there--she went through elementary school up to secondary school there. I got to know Sister Samuel quite well when my daughter was in school there. She is a remarkable person, as many of the sisters are. I can't remember any other particular sort of scheduled activities.

I would look into requests for contributions, of course, because as soon as any institution opens, especially if it has anything to do with money, everybody wants some help. Guide dogs for the blind--all these kinds of community things. Harold went on that board. We just wanted to make ourselves known in the community, not for our good works necessarily. Interest--I thought that was one of the best ways to advertise. Now we're the only independent savings and loan left. All the others are all parts of chains, branch offices of Home, and Citizens' Federal--all the big ones.

It was very educational. I didn't know anything about how savings and loans operate. It was tremendously interesting. There were a lot of women in the place, I might add, and not just as tellers! [Laughs] The controller is a woman and the head of our loan department is a woman. They started with us and learned. We were pioneers in making loans to women, before there was a law that said you had to.

Chall: Did you have anything to do with that, do you think?

Gatov: In a rather insignificant way. Harold himself is quite a leader. His wife is an artist of remarkable talent. She made this ring. These are the opals that Alan Cranston gave me; she made the ring. He's used to strong-minded women, shall we say. I don't recall ever sitting down with him and saying, "You know, Harold, I think it's terrible that women have such trouble getting loans." I could just see it as we had the loan report, month by month, that women were buying homes--single women--and apparently they weren't having any trouble with us, on the financial end.

Planned Parenthood

Chall: That's good to have on record. I was interested in your activities with Planned Parenthood. In your interview with the Independent, you indicated that your interest stemmed from the time when one of your classmates committed suicide when she discovered she was pregnant.*

*"Libby Gatov Out of the Spotlight, Still Busy," by Beth Ashley, Independent-Journal, December 9, 1975, p. 15.

Chall: I'm just wondering if your participation has something to do with the fact that while you were interested from the time of your college days, there seemed to be so many of your friends from political days in Planned Parenthood, like Roger Kent, who's a vice-president, and Nancy Jewel, who's the secretary; there are probably others here, whose names I don't recognize.

Gatov: Oddly enough, when I first became officially involved, it was with Marin County.

Chall: Was that through somebody you knew?

Gatov: No. Curiously enough, one person, who's a lawyer in San Francisco named Al Palavin, called me up one day. I guess it's a successful technique of successful lawyers; they make you think you should know them. He said, "This is Al Palavin speaking. I'm happy to have the chance to talk to you again." I'd never heard of him, but of course you don't say that, because the onus is on you for not remembering! [Laughs]

He said that he had just had a call from New York, and they wanted to know if I would be interested in going on the Planned Parenthood national board. Somebody in New York had suggested that they might approach me, that I might be interested. I said I thought I would be interested.

That was the beginning of that. Within twenty-four hours, somebody called up from the Marin affiliate as the chapters are called, and wanted to know if I'd go on the Marin board. So the two happened at once. The national was looking for the title. An awful lot of people do that, you know. If they can put in their literature, Formerly Whatever-it-was--dog-catcher or something they think it's good. I don't think they expected that I would participate as much as I did. I don't think they realized how interested I was.

The timing was just perfect. It happened right after I resigned as national committeewoman. It had been a politically sensitive area that I hadn't felt free to push, because in those days, it could be detrimental to a candidate to start pushing for federal funding for family planning, or liberalizing abortion laws, or something like that. But I wanted to work on it. This was another reason I was glad to have no further responsibility to the party. I could do what I wanted to do.

I think this was exactly what happened to Roger. He was on the San Francisco board. He's no longer on it, but he was on it for a long time. I suspect they picked him up rather quickly after he retired.

Gatov: It was something that we both felt very strongly about. I didn't know that he was interested enough to go on it, and he hadn't known that I was. We really hadn't talked about it much.

Nancy Jewel and I started something in 1971. Well, to make it a little more coherent, I went on the national board and on the local board. The longer I was on it, the more apparent it became to me that they had to get into the political scene. By this time, it was becoming possible to get some federal funding. It was just starting. Senator Joe Tydings of Maryland who was defeated later--and was defeated again yesterday, was the sponsor of the first family-planning funding bill on the federal level. That was in 1970.

I remember getting a call from our Washington office, which was functioning by then. Not in any lobbying sense, and not in any sense of trying to build public support, but in the sense of trying to work with legislators, and work with legislation at their request--which you're free to do as a tax-exempt organization--and also acting as consultants to the department of HEW. I remember them calling to see if I thought that Alan Cranston would be willing to be a co-signer, and co-sponsor the bill. I said that I would call and see.

I called, and saw, and he was. He was willing, so he did. Now that Tydings is gone, he's the one that they look to. I felt, first of all, that any organization that has 187 chapters scattered all around the country was a natural political organization! [Laughs] How could you miss? Every time I brought it up, it was knocked down at board meetings and executive committee meetings, and I was reminded that this was a tax-exempt organization, and we simply could not get "mixed up in politics" as it was put. Nobody liked the thought at all.

I was feeling so frustrated about it, and three or four other board members--fortunately for me, from California, some with some money--agreed that they would help finance sort of a pilot program for legislation in California.

The first person I went to was Nancy Jewel, who had been, for eleven years, executive secretary to Attorney General Stanley Mosk and to Tom Lynch. She had run Mosk's campaign. She knew the legislative scene very well indeed. Between the two of us, we had an awful lot of friends in Sacramento. We called ourselves the Public Education and Research Committee of California, which was a grandiose title that said nothing about what we were doing.

We justified it on the basis that the public we were out to educate were legislators. The research had already been paid for by the taxpayers, and was sitting mostly in the files of the Department of Health. We were contented to extract it from the Health Department, where a Dr. Cunningham was a very good friend to us.

Gatov: We opened up on Solano Avenue in Berkeley, about three blocks from the Health Department in those days, and developed strong friendships. They were delighted, as most people in that kind of bureaucracy are, to have any way of getting out their material. They'd been collecting data for years. They knew exactly what the rising rate of venereal disease was at various age levels, where the incidence was highest, what the illegitimacy rates were; they had all the information.

We said, "Fine. We want your information, and we'll get it out in various ways." The first thing we did was put together a one-sheet thing called "The Facts of Life in California." I'll have to send you a copy of it. It's just on one page, and it had what we hoped were fairly startling statistics--and they were startling to people who didn't know anything about them.

In some high schools, half the high school students were going to get venereal disease before they graduated. X number of teenage girls were going to become pregnant, between the ages of whatever the ages were. It was predictable from the data.

Then we had some data that we got from the Department of Welfare, which was what it costs to provide prenatal care and delivery service, and what it costs to have an abortion, and what it costs if the mother and child decide to go on welfare for a year. We added a little more sort of zip to it, in terms of what happens to unwanted children--child abuse, juvenile delinquency, adult delinquency, and so on. The whole yarn.

Well, we went up to Sacramento to see Tony Beilenson, whom we both knew. He was the author of the 1967 Therapeutic Abortion Act, which provided that you could have an abortion if it was necessary to save the life of the mother, or--I can't recall now--there was the case of a deformed fetus. The third reason was to protect the mental or physical health of the mother. That was the big loophole through which the steam engine eventually rolled.

It hadn't been in force very long, and we went up to see Beilenson, as I said. We said we wanted to talk to him about expanding the abortion law. He looked absolutely horrified, and he said, "Do you know how many abortions were performed on women last year as a result of my legislation?" Well, of course we did. [Laughs]

He told us horrible tales about his colleagues getting letters from people saying, "I want you to oppose any bill that has Senator Beilenson's name on it, because he is the abortion king of California. He's encouraging promiscuity"--and all those terrible things.

Integrating Politics And Family Planning

By Elizabeth Readle

WHAT HAPPENS when a woman who has devoted years of her life to political activity — serving her party in numerous capacities and her country as United States Treasurer — retires from the political rat race?

In Elizabeth Smith Gatov's case, she integrates her political experience with one of her lifelong interests: family planning and population control, heading a "central communication system to alert people to matters in this field."

Having served on the national board and executive committee of Planned Parenthood for the last five years, Libby Gatov helped form the Public Education and Research Committee of California. Based in Berkeley and sponsored in part by Planned Parent-

hood, the committee is a clearing house for information on family planning and population problems.

"This is my full-time activity," the silver-haired Mrs. Gatov explained this week before addressing a meeting of officers and county chairmen of the Democratic State Central Committee's Women Division/North.

A former Democratic national committeewoman herself, Mrs. Gatov spoke to the group in the first of a series of addresses which she hopes will "increase public awareness" of population problems.

She explained the purpose of the two-and-one-half month old committee as "to dig up material — files, health data, general information — on population problems, assemble it, and then get it to the public and the deci-

sion-makers."

She describes the "decision makers" as "members of school boards, supervisors, councilmen — legislators at all levels of public life."

"We feel that if they know the facts, they will do the right thing," Mrs. Gatov said of her committee's goal of "infinitely increased public knowledge" concerning population control.

But, she added, "the level of ignorance among otherwise well-informed people in public life is absolutely incredible."

"California is very remiss in the adequacy of its sex education," she added. "It isn't taken with enough seriousness." She cited the increase in venereal disease as well as the growing illegitimacy rate in California to support her

view.

Mrs. Gatov conceded that "population problems may not be affected by legislation." She maintains, however, that legislation is being made "on the basis of ignorance and not information."

Mrs. Gatov is equally concerned about reaching people outside the political sphere.

"Mrs. J. P. Housewife is the most important," she said firmly. "The constituents have the strongest voice that public officials listen to."

While never in an elected position herself, Libby Gatov bases her observation on years of political experience. She said that she harbored a deep concern for population problems even while in public office. Her interest in family planning dates back to her membership in the Margaret Sanger League while at the University of Michigan.

"But for all the years I was in politics, I could not do both," she explained.

Besides, she commented thoughtfully, the subject was "high controversial and debatable then. But since the development of the pill and the acceptance of the pressing population problem, there has been very little resistance to family planning.

"Abortion," she declared, "is where the resistance lies."

Mrs. Gatov, who is married to Albert G. Gatov and lives in Kentfield, said she expects to expand her efforts by taking on yet another project.

"I have been asked to be public affairs advisor to the president of Planned Parenthood," she revealed with a smile, explaining this would involve setting up a national public affairs network similar to the research committee in California.

San Francisco Chronicle

THE PARALLEL HEALTH PROBLEMS OF TEENAGE PREGNANCIES AND VENEREAL DISEASE

...In 1969, the public tax paid cost of VD treatment and care was \$11,000,000 by the state and counties

...The public tax paid cost in 1970 for welfare mothers (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and illegitimate children under seven was \$300 million.

...1 in 5 highschool students will contract a venereal disease before graduation according to present estimates. In some areas it will be one half the student body.

...In one county, 76% of girls receiving VD treatment, had not used any kind of contraceptive, indicating generally minimal use of contraception among sexually active teenagers.

...The illegitimacy rate in California has risen from 9.4% of all births in 1966 to 12.9% of all births in 1970.

...Legal abortions in 1970 numbered 70,000. There has been a concurrent decline in number of illegal abortions and unnecessary death.

...Cost to taxpayers of unwanted pregnancies:

Therapeutic Abortion.....	\$ 250-	\$ 400
Prenatal and Delivery Charges.....	800	1200
Mother and Child on AFDC (welfare).....	3600 a year times	
	18 years equals	\$64,800

...More than 50% of teenage brides are pregnant. Such marriages have much higher divorce rates.

...Unwanted children, reared by unwilling, ill-prepared parent(s) are frequently "battered babies", early residents in juvenile detention facilities, and later in adult prisons at cost of \$4000 per year to the taxpayers.

...California, though ahead of other states is still seriously deficient in honest and early sex hygiene programs in public schools.

...Contraceptives for sexually active teenagers are still difficult to obtain because the services of a doctor are required to provide contraception for girls.

...Termination of unwanted pregnancies is even more difficult to obtain except for those who can afford to pay for them.

THE COST OF UNWANTED PREGNANCIES COMPOUNDS AS TIME GOES ON.

For further information write to:

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE OF CALIFORNIA
1760 Solano Ave. Berkeley, CA 94707

Gatov: Well, we left rather quickly, [laughs] and thought, oh gee, a morale problem that's horrendous. What are we going to do? So we went back to see Dr. Cunningham, who also knew Beilenson very well. He said, "What you need is affirmative results." He said, "I'll get those for you." He was able to produce, from hospitals which had frequently had a number of botched abortion cases, what their incidence now was of botched abortions, and what the decline in the maternal death rate was.

Pretty soon, we were able to cheer Tony up. Some thirty-six women would have died if it hadn't been for his legislation. Gradually, we were able to sort of turn him around. Also we tried to put together a network in California, with the Planned Parenthood affiliates, of which there were seventeen, to get them to get in touch with their legislators and say, "I just want you to know that I'm very interested in family planning, and I think I can answer your questions. I'd like to give you the information that we have on what's going on in our community." And develop a fact sheet just like our state one.

Well, to make a long story short, three years produced a fantastically good result. I really was just overwhelmed. Beilenson even got Governor Reagan to approve [laughs] of abortion for people who were, are, or might become welfare recipients. We were very frank about attacking it on the economic issue, because we felt that a third of the legislature was for us on just ideological grounds. Another third was opposed on the same grounds. But there was that third in the middle that we needed, and we figured that taxes are really the only things that will sway people, so we used it.

Chall: How long did your organization last?

Gatov: Three years, and then we folded that up. But it was immediately followed by the creation of a statewide organization called Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California, which has an office in Sacramento, run by a woman, Norma Clevenger, who had worked part-time for Nancy and me. She has a board of directors. It's a much more structured, well-run thing than ours was but she has followed our procedures.

Chall: But is it part of the Planned Parenthood?

Gatov: Yes. All the affiliates contribute to it.

Chall: And they do this, and still retain their tax-free status?

Gatov: Yes, because they don't lobby. The definition of lobbying is to ask somebody to vote for a bill, so none of the staff and none of the people as Planned Parenthooders do that. What they can do is respond to a

Gatov: request for information from a legislator. Beilenson would call Norma Clevenger and say, "I'd like to have you come testify please, tomorrow afternoon, or get somebody to come testify on this bill of mine that's coming up, that does such and such."

All of these Planned Parenthood board members and volunteers and so forth are perfectly free as constituents, to go to their representatives and say, "This is a subject I care a great deal about. I'd like to have you know more about it."

Chall: I think that's a remarkable story.

Gatov: Now I'm also chairman of that for Alameda-San Francisco, and I'm also the national chairman of the Public Affairs Committee, as it's called, which came into being as soon as we folded up the California one.

Chall: And you're doing somewhat the same thing, then? Just gathering facts and seeking out the right legislators.

Gatov: Yes. I'm trying to get this going in all of the other states. There's a staff in New York, and we're the glamour program of the whole organization now. [Laughs] But it's still awfully hard to get any effective work done. People say they'll write letters, and they'll say that they're going to call on their congressman, but they hate it.

Chall: I know how they feel. It's important, though.

Gatov: Well, it's been effective, too. It's been very gratifying.

Lecturer in Political Science

Chall: Yes, you've really come a long way in California. And how did it happen that you became a distinguished lecturer in political science [at Armstrong College, Berkeley]?

Gatov: [Laughs] Because of my old friend Dr. Shear from Alaska.

Chall: How long have you been teaching?

Gatov: This is my third year.

Chall: Two classes. What are they?

Gatov: One's just straight American Government, and the other's called Political Action. That is sort of a blend of Coro Foundation techniques and the expression of, hopefully, a little more sophisticated approach to current

Gatov: events. They all, in that class, are required to give an oral report on a governmental activity. I give them a long list--registrar of voters office, the school board, city councils--whatever. Social Security's a very popular one. They're supposed to go make visits and ask questions, and give an oral report to the class, so that everyone learns about how San Francisco's been polluting the bay, which my class knew long before the paper came out with it today. Because we had somebody working at the Water Resources Board.

Chall: Do you get students into an organization?

Gatov: Yes, and it's not very hard. They're not there on any regular basis. But I tell them how to make the overture: to go in as though you were a newspaper reporter, but assure them that you're not; that you're just a student, that you need to find out how their agency works, and where its funding comes from, and what its purposes are, and what its history is, and what its legislative background is, how much cooperation it gets, and try to observe for yourself what the staff morale is. Do you think it's doing a good job, or an inferior job? Is it worth the taxpayers' money? This kind of thing.

Chall: Do they stay there over a period of time, or do they get it all from that one interview?

Gatov: No, they're supposed to make several interviews, with several people. You can tell pretty quickly whether they have or not. [Laughs] The second half of the quarter, the reports start. So they were very fascinated by this morning's news story--no more sewer connections in San Francisco! [Laughs] They knew about that years ago! I enjoy it immensely. It doesn't pay very much, but I'm reminded of Mrs. Roosevelt [laughs] who once said that she didn't mind being paid for the ads and so forth that she appeared in, because that gave her more money to give away. I feel exactly the same way! [Laughs] I can give it to candidates that I like, and this is very nice. I enjoy it.

Chall: Well, it must be stimulating to you.

Gatov: It is.

[end Tape 12, side 2; begin Tape 13, side 1]
(Interview 12, May 19, 1976, continued)

Chall: You have a contract that's set up year-to-year, so that you don't have tenure.

Gatov: I have no contract. I have nothing on paper. Mr. Armstrong, who is the son of the founder, I met once. I was taken to his office after Shear had hired me. He's a strange sort of fellow. He just sort of looked

Gatov: me over and he said, "Well, I'm glad you're going to be with us, and you will help our affirmative action program." [Laughter] Once again caught in the two-way street!

But I didn't care. The founder--who must have been really quite a remarkable fellow--his widow was a lovely person--had the interesting idea that everybody who goes into business ought to know something about their government. So it is required that they take at least one course in political science, as they travel through this business school.

In the course of time, I get everybody.

Chall: You are the political science teacher?

Gatov: Shear and I team-teach a good deal of the time, and the students seem to like it if we try to give partisan points of view--in other words, if he gives the Republican and I try to give the Democratic point of view. It's a very easy working relationship. I teach the other course--the two hour course--alone--Political Action. I just hate to miss it.

X WOMEN IN POLITICS

National and Local Committees

Chall: Now I'm going to ask you questions about women, and women in politics. Do you think that the fifty-fifty representation on committees in the party at the national level and the state level and in districts gives women an influence?

Gatov: It gives them an opportunity to have an influence. Whether they take it or not is another matter. If they didn't have that equal representation open to them, then they'd have to work to get it.

Chall: It gives them a path?

Gatov: Yes, it's there. If they want to use it, they can use it. I think they increasingly are, there's no question about it.

Chall: What about women having a general influence as members of the national committee?

Gatov: It's hard for me to say now, because I'm sure it's changed enormously. I would say that some had considerable, and many had none. That's about the way I'd put it. For instance, there was Ella Grasso. As you can well imagine, she was quite influential. Margaret Price from Michigan, who became vice-chairman during the Kennedy administration, was quite influential. Georgia Neese Clark Gray, who was my predecessor as Treasurer, was on from Kansas. I was on the executive committee within a very short time after I was on the national committee, and stayed on it throughout. That was a group of just eight.

Chall: Eight on the executive committee?

Gatov: Yes.

The affinity is natural—
the benefits are mutual

ELIZABETH RUDEL SMITH,
Class of 1933 and now Treasurer
of the United States, writes persua-
sively on a subject that she knows



WOMEN & POLITICS

WOMEN and politics have a natural affinity for each other.

It is especially evident in those parts of the country where campaigns are conducted for the most part by volunteers, states where party politics is comparable to a citizen's movement.

"The educated woman . . . finds herself faced with a peculiarly complex dilemma. She is educated to appreciate and to contribute to the world in which she lives in a much broader capacity than that of wife and mother. She wants to be a good wife and mother, but she also wants to participate in a significant manner in the work of the world outside the home. . . . She wants the love of her husband and children, and the shared responsibility of making good human beings of her children, but she also feels she has capacities and

abilities which cry out for exercise, and for the discipline of using her mind to some useful purpose outside the home," wrote Ashley Montagu, a shrewd observer of our sex.

Smith graduates have established a national reputation for awareness of what goes on around them, and for a spirited interest in participating in the events of their time. The college administration probably deserves a good deal of credit for it. For instance, I have a vivid recollection of the stimulus delivered by President William Allan Neilson thirty years ago when he told the assembled student body that since we were the beneficiaries of the finest educational process then available to young American women, we had an obligation to "plow back" what we had learned. He put it in the sense that if we failed to respond to the need for leadership, when it became the turn of our generation to run the country, we would

be remiss in our responsibility to our predecessors who made such an education for women possible, and to the generations to follow who would have to repair the results of our refusal to function.

"From what other group of women can future leadership be expected," he queried, "if not from those now undergraduates at Smith?"

Politics Offers Satisfying Possibilities

WHILE women are in the "nesting period", caring for a husband, a home, and small children all at once, there is little freedom for political activity, but surely enough to discover the relative strength of the school system in time to help do something about it if necessary, adequate classroom space and qualified, well-paid teachers being no accident. If a community has good schools, it is probably because an earlier group of parents surveyed the academic resources their taxes were supporting, and spurred the community into improving them by organizing campaigns for the passage of school bond issues.

However, when the youngest child reaches the stage of being in school most of the day, many of us experience a strange sense of transition; time, once so hard to come by, is suddenly almost abundant. Certainly this is an important moment of decision, of exerting a free choice which can have a great deal to do with one's way of life in the years to follow.

If it is true women are happiest when caring for someone or something, and the evidence is overwhelming that they are, politics provides any number of satisfying possibilities, because it touches just about every phase of life. It is an environment which discourages feelings of futility, loneliness, and lack of worth, because it is creative, demanding and inclusive. Its practitioners are participants, not spectators, in the vast, complex, confusing drama of the nineteen-sixties. Yet politics is a field of activity often referred to with contempt. Probably the image it evokes depends on how we were brought up and what our exposures to it have been.

The Only Means to Responsible Self-government

TO ME, "politics" as applied to the workings of a free society means the method by which differing views on what should become acts of government, any sort of government, are eventually adjusted. It is the process by which controversy in the field of lawmaking is eventually resolved. And the thing which differentiates it sharply from almost all other fields of activity is that is practiced entirely by human beings. No one has yet invented a way to mechanize it, streamline it or even make it very efficient. With the indispensable tools of the telephone and the mails, it is practiced by people, on other people.

It is the only means by which the end, responsible self-government, is achieved. And self-government is not very widely practiced, if we use as a definition of a self-governing nation, one which has been using that form at least through two generations, one in which all people pay their taxes, and which can pass the reins of government from one group to an opposing one without violence.

It has been my experience that in politics, as in anything else, there are all shades of honesty, intelligence and competence. The people I remember associating with over the years are the finest I have ever known, intent on doing a constructive job for their city, their state or their country. The less worthy tend to reap their own reward and retire from

public view. The real wonder of our system is that so many fine people can be called away from otherwise generally satisfactory lives, to offer themselves as candidates and go through the rigors of the American election process. Winners or losers, they probably make a genuine contribution toward making our system of representative government work.

The word "science" applied to politics has bothered me for many years, because there is little about it which follows any exact or proven pattern, and few situations which develop along surely predictable lines. I think "the art of the possible" is a better peg. And most women spend their lives achieving the "possible" in one field or another.

Election Day—A Recurring Deadline

POLITICS and government determine the immunization children must have before they start school, at what age they may enter, the length of the school year, and the extent and curricula of the school systems within a state. Politics determines the extent of military service sons and husbands are required to give. Politics has a great deal to do with the amount of taxes you pay at the city, county, state and federal levels, and what you get in return. It greatly influences the interest rate you pay on home mortgages, loans at the bank, installment purchases, and it is a major influence in the sort of roads you drive on, the kind of water you drink or swim in, whether the area you live in is infested with mosquitoes.

Today, our country is entering a new phase of its history which will require new strength, new self-control, a higher level of maturity, from all Americans.

If we are to meet the tough challenges ahead, the government will require the services of the best talents available. Non-participation in our nation's affairs is the only internal "sand in the machinery" which can make our system fail. The abrasive action of political campaigns makes it work, bringing us all to at least a biennial point of decision. Election day, eerily hushed and suspenseful, is the recurring deadline.

The need is for able men and women in politics and government taking an active role in the affairs of both political parties, from the community to the national level. These people must have the character to discharge responsibilities with courage, judgment, integrity, and dedication to the public interest because the weight of their collective wisdom has awesome consequences.

There are so many facets to public service. In my vocabulary, it includes just about anything which makes our system of self-government work better for more people. So, to me, it embraces all the varieties of community service individuals can provide, by helping, with their skills or money, or both, to achieve, for instance, improvements in our public educational system, so that our young people of promise, anywhere in the country, can develop their fullest potential and become productive citizens.

It means support of the many people-to-people programs by which, through acquaintance and understanding, fears and suspicions between us and people from other countries may be reduced.

In a nutshell, it means an attitude of alert interest and participation in the problems of our times which we all share whether we wish to or not.

Of recent years, I have had an enormous amount of satisfaction from being involved in politics in California—with the result that it is now nearly impossible for me to understand how intelligent and otherwise responsible American men and

women can say, with no trace of concern, that they don't know anything about politics, and really, they don't care to.

Since politics supplies the energy to the process of government, provides the method by which differing views on what should become acts of government are eventually adjusted, and is the abrasive stimulus by which controversy in the public realm is eventually adjusted, the most charitable explanation one can find for such remarks as "Why, I wouldn't think of getting mixed up in politics!", is that the maker just doesn't understand much about what makes this country tick.

The machinery of government is only as serviceable as the tools which keep it running, and the tools are political.

Philosophy of This Administration

IF I may describe what I feel about being a part of the present administration, it means to me being part of a government that cares, that will generate and then implement new ideas, new solutions for old and unresolved problems, and for new ones as well.

It means believing that our country is big enough, rich enough, and wise enough to assure every child a good education wherever he may be growing up, to assure every family a decent place in which to live, every worker a job, and at a fair wage, every sick person good medical care, proper drugs and hospitalization, and every senior citizen a comfortable and dignified life.

It means rejection of the notion that hunger and discrimination are inevitable. It means belief that when public resources are developed they should be developed for the benefit of the public and not for private profit. It means defense of the Bill of Rights, all of it, as the keystone of the greatest thing this great country has given us—our personal liberty. It means not being afraid of free speech, including defense of the constitutional rights of extremists, right or left, as long as they use peaceful persuasion, misguided though they may be. It has full confidence in the abiding good sense of Americans.

It means devotion to competitive free enterprise, and the enlargement of opportunities for individuals. Grow we must, or perish we shall.

It means appreciation of the immense difficulties of the many new nations as they struggle to find their place in the world—we hope with our help in the *free* world.

It means being part of a government which, since Thomas Jefferson, has trusted the judgment of an informed people, and rejects the idea that a few know best, what is good for the many.

To me, it is an enormous satisfaction to be working with vigorous, intelligent and dedicated people, who believe in, and are supporting with all the energy of the best years of their lives, the things I believe in too.

Representative government, such as ours, is utterly dependent on the people who make themselves available to it.

As someone, seasoned in political activity, said to me quite a few years ago, "In politics, as in any other kind of activity, you do business with the people you *have* to do business with—if it turns out that you like them, too, that's a bonus."

Personally, I've had a great many bonuses.

It was my good fortune to get into politics in an evolving situation, which had no heritage of certain categories of activity being the special preserve of any particular group.

The job to be done was, and still is, so tremendous, there is plenty of room for all varieties of help, at every level of activity. The consideration is aptitude for the work to be done, and the available time in which to do it.

And it is the "available time" aspect which brings us the volunteer services of hundreds and hundreds of women. They provide the basic strength of the campaign structure, running and staffing almost all headquarters in the state. Single women, with jobs, have given invaluable service by working at headquarters in the evening, donating their many talents to something they believe in. Married women, with jobs, will often take the precinct in which they live, which after they've had it a while, they jealously regard as their own, because they have come to know everybody in it, and feel that they, and they alone, can get the best results from it on election day. They are probably right, too.

It has been my experience that women are seldom refused recognition in politics, provided they have those basic attributes of responsibility and dependability. They are usually then given that most genuine of all compliments, more and more work to do.

There is only one phase of political activity which presents a problem for many women: running for an office other than a local one, or accepting an appointment other than a local one that is not in the home community. It is sometimes a forgotten fact that most women have home responsibilities which naturally and necessarily, come first. So they are not free to move to their state capital and serve in the legislature, if their state has long sessions, or to go to Washington in a federal office.

Our Survival Depends on Politics

ALL this is to say, that in my admittedly limited experience, women seem to play any political role which their individual talents and circumstances permit.

And I have not known any, once exposed, who did not regard political activity as interesting and important because they recognized that in the political realm lies the fate of the nation, and with it, the destiny of the human race.

Politics is sometimes referred to as a "game". Such a flippant and derogatory term misses the point because the end result of politics is election to public office of people with opinions. Since so many issues of the utmost importance to our way of life, and to life itself, are sometimes settled by the difference of one, two or three votes in a legislative body, perhaps political action is the most serious use one can make of time.

President Kennedy stated some months ago that "We are faced with powerful and unrelenting pressures which threaten freedom in every corner of the globe, and with military power so formidable that it menaces the physical survival of our own nation."

"To meet these problems will require . . . the combined efforts of all of our people. No one has a right to feel that having entrusted the tasks of government to new leaders in Washington, he can continue to pursue his private comfort unconcerned with America's challenges and dangers. For freedom is to survive and prosper it will require the sacrifice of the effort and the thoughtful attention of every citizen."

Events have amplified his meaning.

Chall: How many women were there, during those times? Can you recall?

Gatov: I'm sorry, I can't recall. I was the western woman member, and I don't remember who the others were on the executive committee. There were two western members. I can't recall who the man was.

Chall: But you don't recall being the only woman?

Gatov: No. I presume Ella Grasso--I think that's part of how I got to know these people that I just mentioned. Probably they were on the executive committee too.

Chall: Did the men, when you were on a small committee like that, listen to you?

Gatov: Yes.

Chall: Once they put you on, they were willing to pay attention?

Gatov: I found it so. Even Carmine De Sapio, for instance. I was riding the bus to someplace, and he was sitting right in back of me. I remember saying to him that I didn't think I quite understood why something-or-other was about to happen, or was being done, or was being considered. He sort of laughed and said, "I don't think you ever don't understand what's being considered." I took that as a high compliment, [laughs] coming from him particularly!

No, I never felt ignored, or put down, or tolerated, whatever word you would use. I tried--and I still try in public situations--not to intrude myself unless I have something that I think is worth saying. In other words, not to just take up the time of the whole body chattering or making observations that are interesting to me but to nobody else. Because, I've noticed over the years that if you do that, and you don't feel it necessary to comment on everything, you tend to get listened to when you do speak up.

I certainly don't feel that in Planned Parenthood or politically, or on our First Federal board, that I've not had my share of attention paid. After all, Planned Parenthood took the whole program, nationally, that Nancy and I pioneered here, so that's pretty nice.

Chall: I was wondering if there was any difference in the attitudes in working between the men and the women on, let's say, Planned Parenthood board or some of the other private agencies and the bank, that differ from the political sphere?

Gatov: Yes, I think so. I've felt freer and more confident in the political arena than I have in either of the other two. I felt surer of what I was saying and wanting to do. I was more confident that the direction,

Gatov: whatever it might be, that we were going was the right one. I can't particularly account for that, except that I spent more time in politics. [Laughs] That's probably it.

Chall: You knew it well.

Gatov: I just felt completely comfortable in it, and I still do. I'm very comfortable in political conversations. I feel as though I understood what was going on all around me, a sensitivity that I don't feel is as sharp at the bank meetings or at the Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood, unfortunately, has an awful lot of personality problems--always has had--and I don't understand what lies behind some of these subtle moves, and bureaucratic infighting.

The political arena seems clearer, strangely.

Chall: Did you ever find that rank-and-file women were not ready to follow women political leaders?

Gatov: Yes, and not just then, but now as well. I was listening in the car the other day to a poll which was giving percentages on men and women who would be willing to vote for a woman qualified to be president of the United States. I don't remember what the total was--it was high, more than fifty percent for each--but it was a higher percentage of men who would support a woman than women. This has always been true, in my experience.

Chall: I thought that had finally changed.

Gatov: Women do not support women as well as one might suppose.

Chall: When you were very active, I noticed, from the material you gave me, that there were many women who were chairmen of precinct organizations in large segments of the community--it was either a county or a major portion of a country. Were women rank-and-file workers ready to work with them without any problems?

Gatov: When you got to the point of political participation, you cease to be rank-and-file, in my spectrum. You are a motivated individual who wants to participate in the process. Since that was the central thrust, so to speak, it didn't appear to matter who was in charge. Of course, the years that I was active in politics were the years before volunteer activity went into sort of a decline. It was not difficult to get women to volunteer for these jobs.

They had the great gifts, to me, of both available time and competence. Most of the men who were politically interested did not have the time. Maybe they didn't have the competence either. I'm glad you picked that

Gatov: up, because I meant to mention that. There was one campaign in particular--I'm trying to think of where I was. I think it was the Brown campaign for governor in '62 when I was doing a lot of telephoning into the counties, and so forth. I believe, I recall, that every headquarters--except the one that I was sitting in on Market Street--which was the northern California headquarters--was headed by a woman. Some were paid and some not paid, but there was a woman in charge of every single one of them, which I thought was a great testimony to the competence of women in the Democratic party.

Chall: Did you find that women were more capable in some areas of work than in others? Somebody has divided political activity into three parts--organization of precincts--rallies, voting, etc.; raising money; and media. And he felt that few people--whether men or women--were strong in each.

Gatov: I would say that they were not strong in raising money normally, in the sense that Ann Eliaser was, who was able to raise large amounts of money, by the time she really got good at it in the late sixties. So mostly they didn't participate particularly; they would contribute but they didn't raise it. Except at the local level, and then they were very good at such kinds of things as what I'm going to do tomorrow for Barbara Boxer, who's running for supervisor in my district. This fund raiser is being put on at a friend's house. I said that I would come up in the morning and help.

What I'm going to help do is wash the lettuce in the washing machine for the salad! [Laughs] Get the tables set up, and chairs, and the place for the person to collect the checks as they come in, get the bar set up, and all these things. This kind of fund raising they're good at. People enjoy it very much. It has sort of an old-fashioned quality to it. Like a potluck dinner [laughs] where everybody brings a casserole--this kind of community effort. That kind of fund raising they do very well. As far as going around asking people for money, it doesn't work as well.

Chall: How many women are given chances to work with media--advertising?

Gatov: I haven't seen very many in it. Our method, normally of campaigns, has been to handle it through an advertising agency, and the agency usually gets a fifteen percent commission, and that's what they're paid.

Nancy Sloss, though, is an exception to that. She's been working with the Guggenheim firm in Washington, and that's one of the two or three largest media firms, who are retained by candidates from all over the country.

Chall: Are there any in the local ones, like Sandy Weiner?

Gatov: There are some women who work for him. I guess Ann Eliaser is good at that too. She's got a firm of her own now, called Compass Associates.

I heard somebody referring to a woman--I didn't pick up her name--as an absolute genius at time-buying. Time-buying means picking just before or after a particular program, when they assess the audience at its optimum; this kind of thing. It's a real skill, obviously. There's no reason why women shouldn't, but in my day they simply hadn't gotten there yet.

The Matter of Exploitation

Chall: Once I think you told me that women are used in politics, but as long as it's for a good cause, it doesn't matter. I wondered what you meant by that.

Gatov: [Laughs] It's a pretty awful thing to say, but I think it's true! [Laughter] For a variety of things: They can be used for their availability of time and energy, which is probably the most common. I think this is why we are seeing so few volunteers among young women today. They're darned if they're going to be exploited as they feel my generation was exploited.

I didn't feel exploited. I thought it was just great. [Laughs] Maybe I didn't know any better, but they would not do it today. That was certainly a way that they were used. And they would often be made cochairman of something, and it was definitely understood that their half was the inferior half. Their job was....for instance, if a comment had to be made by the campaign, the chairman--the male--would issue the press release, which the women had probably drawn up and typed, and taken over to him to okay. Then he took it to the paper. [Laughs]

This kind of thing I think is absolutely true. I think they were not given the feeling that they made suitable candidates. I think I told you that in 1950 when Helen Douglas was defeated, there had been six other Democratic women who ran for Congress. A man named Harold McGrath was executive secretary, and Oliver Carter, now a federal judge, was the party chairman.

McGrath lives in Santa Rosa now, and is with Schwabacher and Company, the brokerage firm. He told me that of the six women who had run for Congress that year, all of them had been defeated, and none of them had sent their opponent a telegram of congratulations! He just wanted me to remember this breach. This was a sample of women's bad behavior in politics. He really didn't approve of women in politics.

Gatov: He told me that with my accent--I never understood what he meant-- I should never venture north of San Francisco.

Chall: Too cultivated?

Gatov: I don't know. He never went any further, but [laughs] I did venture further! He was a curious man. But he really didn't think women had much place in politics. There were many men that I encountered who didn't. But naturally, when you find somebody like that, you ignore them. You don't try to get into a head-on collision with them or explain to them why. And then there are a lot of men who assume that women are only in politics for sexual purposes. You're only there because you're somebody's mistress.

Chall: There has been some of that, I guess.

Gatov: Of course there has.

Chall: But it takes two to tango, and I always wondered what they were doing there too.

Gatov: [Laughter] You put lively people of both sexes together, and you're going to get a lot of sex. It doesn't matter what the focus is.

Chall: There are people, I guess, who have always said this about women in politics. What are you in there for if it's not this?

Gatov: Well, this comes from people who regard it as a dirty, filthy business. It's sort of, "What's a nice girl like you doing playing the piano in a house like this?" [Laughs] I've encountered a lot of that.

Chall: You've encountered a lot of that attitude?

Gatov: That attitude. "I can't understand why a nice person like you would get involved in politics."

Chall: Men would say that to you?

Gatov: Yes. Frequently it was Republicans, I'm sorry to say, who said that to me more than Democrats. Usually when I wasn't at home. This didn't happen as much in California as it did in other places. I had relatives, as you know, all over the East. It would be often when I was visiting them that people who were not political would say something like that.

It always infuriated my mother! [Laughs] She didn't like politics herself, but she didn't like anybody saying that what I did was not right.

The Matter of Stress

Chall: How about women reacting differently from men in the stress of party activity? I may have asked you this before. Is it more difficult in stressful situations, which campaigns are, conventions are, to hold themselves together and be cool? Not get upset and angry, and have their feelings hurt?

Gatov: I would say yes. There are far more women that I've known than men who have gotten angry and upset and had their feelings hurt. There are some women--Liz Snyder, for instance--who was just totally cool all the time. I would say that she was not the usual. It has been more of a problem, and they do tend to get emotionally involved in the campaigns that they're in. If the candidate loses, they take it more personally, apparently.

Chall: Are you--?

Gatov: --one of those?

Chall: Yes.

Gatov: Decreasingly. [Laughs] I'm learning! Or perhaps, have learned.

Chall: It isn't necessarily a handicap, is it?

Gatov: Not while everything's going on, because it means that you'll give it that extra charge of energy, and the extra hours and so forth, than if it's just a nine-to-five job. But it can be debilitating too. If you have a series of defeats, you begin to get depressed about it. You begin to feel guilty sometimes, too. You didn't do the things that you might have done. If you'd done this instead of that, it might have come out differently. I've gotten past most of that, now.

Chall: Why don't the men take it so seriously, or as seriously.

Gatov: Maybe some men do, I don't know. I think Roger does feel very emotionally involved in the things that he's been concerned about. I really can't say why they don't. I don't know. Maybe they do. I'm watching my son now, who's the manager of Tunney's campaign. He keeps assuring me that everything is fine, and his stomach is calm, and he's sleeping well, and all these things. I must say that he looks well. I guess he's playing tennis from time to time. But I could tell from his mannerisms, and the speed at which he talks that he's just as tight as an E-string.

Gatov: So I wouldn't say that they don't. It may be that they show it a little differently. I see it in my son because I know him so well. I know how he is when he's relaxed and when he's not.

Chall: It may be that they've learned to hold their feelings in.

Gatov: Maybe. It's the old masculine mystique that you're not supposed to cry, you're not supposed to show your feelings, you're not supposed to show affection--all these things. I think this is just one more.

Chall: If in the course of time, women or even men are rebuffed from time to time in the party, and they stay in, can they continue to have an influence if they just stick with it?

Gatov: I would suspect so, because if they're rebuffed and stay in, it must mean that they've got some support. For instance, Bob Schwartz was rebuffed repeatedly, and finally got out, but only after it took practically a bulldozer.* Most ordinary people would have gotten out a year before he did, recognizing that with no more support than he had, they couldn't do anything.

He was an extraordinary example of what I'm saying. Usually people who are rebuffed have a bigger fallback position than he had, in order to stay in.

Chall: I'm thinking, let's say--certainly Carmen Warschaw has been rebuffed a number of times.

Gatov: Well, she has the attribute that most people don't have, and that's a tremendous amount of money at her command. I'm sure it's less now, because of the new campaign laws, than it used to be, but between her father, and her husband, and her brother, and herself, she was able to finance peoples' campaigns. She could make a congressman. That's great, but most of us can't ever do that.

She would never be in a position of being so rebuffed that she had to get out.

Chall: And Paul Ziffren?

Gatov: Same sort of situation. Paul was an extraordinarily competent fundraiser, and still is. So he would never be rebuffed.

*Robert Schwartz, Northern California Vice-chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee elected in January, 1975, was voted out of office in June 1976 after nearly a year of maneuvering and turmoil among party leaders.

Chall: And Clara Shirpser?

Gatov: You know, until very recently, I used to see Clara out at just about everything. She would come to the kind of pledge meetings, you know, that we'd have, for a dinner. People would say that they would take a table or two tables, or five tickets, or whatever. Clara was always there, and she would take her table, and she would sell it, and she would be at the function, and was a participating part.

She didn't come around headquarters after she ceased being national committeewoman. I think she realized that--well, there really wasn't room. I don't know quite how else to put it. Before I succeeded her, it was my job to take her phone calls, frankly. (I was volunteering in the office, and there were three or four of us, and that was all.) There really were several reasons. One of them was that it took her a very long time to get through explaining her complaint, which it usually was. She was upset because something had happened or had not happened. It took a lot of listening. Others just got fed up with it.

I think they were very glad to have her help, when she offered it. But I don't think they wanted to live through the involvement with her personally. This is my guess. It really never came up very much. I mean, Clara would be picked for a committee, for instance--say in the Brown campaign of '62. She would be on the northern California steering committee, which would meet perhaps once. Everybody would get together, and they'd all say what was on their minds, have a drink, and go home. That was the end of that.

I don't recall seeing her in headquarters at any time.

Chall: There the rejection was more or less total?

Gatov: Yes. I think she was regarded as a freak, an accident.

Chall: Politically, it is quite true that she was. I'm sure she so regarded herself. But the fact that she wasn't able to stay in....

Gatov: Now take, for instance, Edith Friedenrich, who I think was on that Kefauver delegation.

Chall: Yes.

Gatov: Or any one of a number of other people. I think the situation would have been quite different. It's a matter of personality more than anything else. Certainly not ideology! She always felt very defensive about Estes, and nobody else much liked Estes, particularly. Except for that, there was no problem.

Chall: These are things that happen in any group, politically?

Gatov: I think it's a matter of group dynamics, really, now that we understand it better.

Chall: So you can stay in and have influence if you want to?

Gatov: Oh, yes, if you have a base, a coterie of people, or the capacity to raise or contribute a lot of money. Nobody's going to say no.

Chall: Money is the mother's milk of politics, no matter how--

Gatov: --how it's acquired? [Laughter] It's different now, it really is.

Will Women in Government Make a Difference

Chall: Do you think that government will, or can you see that it is going to be different if women are in legislative and administrative positions?

Gatov: Yes, I think it's going to be vastly improved.

Chall: Do you think they look at issues differently, or that they look at issues that men won't look at?

Gatov: I don't know whether women are going to retain what I think is their best quality in public office after another twenty-five or fifty years. I think, first of all, in order to get to elective office they're accustomed to listening, and to studying, and to paying attention to an individual. I really think that women have a better capacity for that than the male, who generally does it with sort of blinders on. I think women are more sensitive, by training perhaps, if nothing else.

They are used to considering something besides, perhaps, the economic ramifications of something. I think it's no accident that the Mothers' March For Peace-kinds of groups were much bigger than their equivalent among men in the same age brackets. I don't know what the sex determination was on the campus-demonstration level. I know perfectly well that the older groups of people far more often tended to be women than men, in that particular instance.

Now I would think that men would be just as much opposed to their children going to war as women, but I think women were willing to be more dramatic about it. Again, maybe it was a matter of time.

Chall: Well, if the marches were held on weekends--

Gatov: They usually were. There're a couple of examples why I'm optimistic now. It's possible that they will lose this human concern, after they've had power for a longer period. I hear nothing but good things about Elizabeth Holtzman, for instance, who's a new member of Congress, and Bella Abzug, whether you dislike her style or her foghorn voice, she has accomplished an enormous amount. I'm delighted that she's going to run for the Senate, and I hope she makes it, and keeps Buckley out. I think it's just lovely.'

Chall: In our local area, March Fong and Dorothy Donahoe come to mind, and Pauline Davis--there are just a few who've managed to hang **on**.

Gatov: Well, Pauline I think doesn't fit. I think she has been just a good conscientious legislator. Dorothy Donahoe was very effective in her brief tenure in the field of education. March Fong Eu I came to know and admire enormously when I was doing this effort in Sacramento for Planned Parenthood, because she was very, very helpful. She came up with that famous crack about VD as "hitting the suburbs like nothing since crabgrass."

Chall: Yes, that was the bill that the governor [Reagan] vetoed. In education, wasn't it? Sex education. Yes, she took a strong stand.

Gatov: A very strong stand, and was extremely effective. So much so that she got a promise out of him that she would stop campaigning around the state, developing telegrams and phone calls and things to his office, if he would agree to sign the bill next year. He did agree, and he did sign.

I remember also, when there was a resolution to come up before the Assembly Judiciary Committee, which was the first of the resolutions relating to an amendment to the constitution to repeal the Supreme Court decision on abortion. March was very supportive of our side on this, and she just went in in her Chinese-print gown. She just looks so smart, when she wears these things. No foolish, fluffy thing she! She spoke for about three sentences, and said that she was appearing in opposition to the bill, and she hoped that the judiciary committee wouldn't spend any time considering the bill, and just dump it. With that, she walked out of the room, and the chairman said, "Do I hear a motion to move the bill out?" There was utter silence.

After three-and-a-half minutes, that Assembly Judiciary Committee heard it and rejected it. Some legislatures are still flopping all over the place on this. I thought she was a tremendous legislator, and I was sorry, sorry to see her leave. But she'd earned a different kind of life.

Chall: That's a difficult life.

Gatov: It's a difficult life. I was talking to Leona Egeland--I don't know whether you know her.

Chall: No.

Gatov: She's one of the young ones. I got to know her quite well, because she was lobbying for ZPG, Zero Population Growth, at the same time that Nancy and I had this activity. It was beautiful, because she could lobby. She could walk into peoples offices and say, "I think you ought to vote against this bill." We would frequently be able to bring up some of the research for her, [laughs] which we did, and some of the other women's groups, too. We traded services, so to speak.

I saw Leona at a symposium we had in Sacramento last month. She looked awfully tired, and I asked her how it was going, and she said, "Oh, dear. It's very discouraging to me. Nobody ever thanks you for what you do; they just blast you for what you don't do."

Chall: Her constituents?

Gatov: Yes. And she felt that the hours were long, which they are! They start in the morning and often go on till midnight. She felt that it was a strain on her family. I've heard this more and more. Governor Brown's resources secretary--what's her name?

Chall: Claire Dedrick?

Gatov: Yes. She told me about it at a function we were at just two weeks ago. She has no children. She was finding it a great problem with her husband, who was there. He wasn't within earshot, when she told me this. She said that now for the first time, she was earning more money than he was. When they moved to Sacramento, he had had to move his activity, which was fortunately a mobile one, to Sacramento.

But she was finding it a strain. So if somebody with no children and a husband with a mobile talent finds it hard, I think that what Leona was saying is going to be said a lot.

Chall: But isn't it just as hard on the men, except that we don't think about it?

Gatov: No, because most of the men, at least that I know, who.... Take Beilenson, for instance, who moved his wife and family to Sacramento and settled in. As the children got older, they needed more money, so his wife took some training and she now teaches handicapped children, to augment their income. That's their lifestyle; and he legislates.

Chall: I suppose the fact that they can all be up there together means that the children do see him?

Gatov: Yes, exactly.

Chall: As much as most children would see their fathers.

Gatov: It's tough. It's difficult, especially in a state like this, where the legislature meets all year around. It's no longer a part-time activity.

Chall: No, it isn't. It's a hard career activity, for a man or a woman.

Gatov: Because the partner can't participate in it, really.

[end Tape 13, side 1; begin Tape 13, side 2]

Chall: There are people who study men and women in politics. I imagine, you've answered some of these questionnaires that came out in 1960 and '64 to the delegates of the national convention.

Gatov: I've had a lot of those. I never knew what they did with them.

Chall: Well, they write articles, and they go into political science journals.

Gatov: I've never seen the results! [Laughs]

Chall: Fascinating! One result on California politicians--this was in 1965--the author indicated that he felt that women in California were more liberal (this was in the Democratic party) than men, and this gave rise to the theory that "female leaders in the Democrat party probably contribute to intraparty issue tension and conflict, and more generally widen interparty differences along the liberal-conservative dimension."*

Gatov: That sounds to me as though it came off of a questionnaire that was sent by somebody from the University of Michigan. I don't think there was that intraparty tension on an ideological basis. There may have been on personality. I just don't agree. He may have found that they were more liberal than men, but I wouldn't conclude anything from that, that it was a source of intraparty tension.

*Edmund Costantini and Kenneth Craik, "Women as Politicians: The Social Background, Personality, and Political Careers of Female Party Leaders," Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 28, Number 2, 1972, p. 234.

Chall: Did you find that the women that you were working with were more liberal than the men?

Gatov: Well, I found that the women--I think I told you that in 1960, I couldn't get any of the women who were in support of Adlai Stevenson to come to Kennedy. None of them! But I got a lot of men to. That was because of a number of things--their emotional attachment to him, and I think the feeling that he was more liberal than Kennedy, which he was.

Chall: There are people who feel that women aren't going to get into political party power at all, even be elected to office, unless they're seeking public office. The only way you can become influential in a party is because you're an office-seeker.

Gatov: That may be the case. I don't know. I think that the changes that are taking place in the function in the party, and its impact, may indicate that is indeed so, because there's less and less room for the kind of volunteer work that I used to do. It's done now by young pros, of both sexes. I've met some marvelous young women who are doing advance-man work and this kind of thing, in recent years. But I haven't met the full-time volunteer types.

Chall: These women are getting paid, and might ultimately seek public office?

Gatov: I think they very well might. One of them, for instance, Cathy O'Neill, who ran against March Fong Eu, is currently on Tunney's staff. Then she took a short leave from that to go over to Jerry Brown's staff and came back to Tunney. I think you're quite right. They're getting in it. Maybe they don't initially get in it for the purposes of running for office, but I think they get the idea pretty fast.

Chall: That's what gives them a certain amount of push, and, clout, and influence?

Gatov: I think so.

Chall: Do you agree with a statement that Maureen Neuberger made a number of years ago, that the "whole area of politics and the arena in which it is played is considered off-limits to women." Was it in your days? Or maybe Oregon is different?

Gatov: Maybe Oregon is different. I didn't think it was off-limits to women, though I was sorry that we didn't have more women in elective office. I wasn't one who particularly tried to push people, who otherwise didn't want to enter it. In other words, we were always recruiting, in the sense that we were looking for people at the local level who were

Gatov: school board members, or supervisors, or on the city council, or a sewage district, any local political base, to run for [state] office. Increasingly over those years, women were occupying those spots. It usually only took one short conversation to convince me that it was a hopeless subject to bring up. They weren't about to move to Sacramento or Washington; so forget it.

Chall: Some women I've talked to recently have said, and I read this also in the press, that they just hate to try to raise money themselves, and they don't like to campaign and say, "I'm better than my opponent," although they're getting better at that, more assertive. But they don't like raising money. I guess that men don't like to go out and have to raise their own money, either. They get somebody else to do it.

Gatov: Nobody likes it, really. Candidates usually dislike raising it themselves.

Chall: So just because women say it, that's no reason that that's any different from any other candidate.

Gatov: I don't think so. I think they all squirm.

Chall: I think times have changed, but they have said that women prefer a supportive role, that they like to work behind the scenes for candidates.

Gatov: Well, it's hard for me to say. That is the role that I assumed. Most of the time, I was following it. That's where I was comfortable, and that's what I liked. My daughter-in-law, who is going to law school at the moment, I'm perfectly certain is going to wind up in a very assertive, out-in-front role. This is just the difference between, I guess, what we were brought up to expect of ourselves, and what people expected of us.

Chall: It isn't necessarily sex is it?

Gatov: I don't think so. It has nothing to do with whether you're male or female. It's that they've arranged their lives in such a fashion. She, for instance, loves to raise money for candidates, and gets hired by candidates to raise money, which astonishes me! [Laughs] She has absolutely no compunctions about it. She'll call somebody and invite him to make a contribution, and he'll say, well he'll think about it, and she'll say, "Well, how about next Friday?" He'll say, "Well, I'll try to have it resolved by Friday." "All right, I'll be there at nine o'clock."

Gatov: Friday morning, she'll be in his office at nine o'clock, and he'll give her the check, she says, "to get rid of me!" She understands it very well, and it doesn't trouble her in the slightest. She thinks that they're just doing the country a favor; doing what they ought to do.

Chall: And she doesn't take it personally?

Gatov: No. She's amazing, to me.

Chall: Now, they've also said that women are naive about politics and government, and they're concerned with moral rather than issues of the outside world. As do-gooders, they just can't be effective. That's, I guess, the put-down: men know the world outside--

Gatov: [Laughter] I can't buy that. I don't think, for instance, a woman like Liz Carpenter, who's never run for office, is deceived by very much of anything. She certainly loves politics, and understands it very well. I think Lady Bird Johnson understood it extremely well.

Chall: If they are interested in moral issues?

Gatov: Well, so what? It doesn't hurt anything. [Laughs] If it's a good idea, we can use a few.

Chall: Women, they say, can't be aggressive and competitive, forceful, and ambitious like men. They're uncomfortable with conflict and contention, and therefore unsuitable to the rough-and-tumble of politics.

Gatov: Well, I would disagree with that. I'm uncomfortable with conflict. I'm uncomfortable with conflict in the home or in any other situation, so it has nothing to do with politics in particular. I suspect there are men who dislike conflict just as much as I dislike it. And I've seen a lot of women who obviously love conflict! They create it if there's none around! So I don't think this is a sexual trait.

The Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee

Chall: Now could you tell me what you know of Katie Louchheim's approach to the women's division, and Margaret Price's? I know you saw them both functioning in office.

Gatov: Well, Katie had a very winning personality. She was a woman of tremendous charm, and self-assurance. She was a rather dainty person in her appearance and manner, and very feminine, and a lovely hostess,

J. Leonard Reinsch

Katie Louchheim

Coffee with Katie - a daily press conference for 1960 Convention

In 1956 the demand for women's angle news during the pre-convention period was over-whelming. In order to meet a similar demand at the 1960 Convention, we propose the following series of press conferences.

Title: Coffee with Katie
For: All reporters of press, radio and television who are seeking women's angle stories
Time: 9:30 or 10 a.m. for 30 minutes from July 8 through 12
Place: Central press facility

Here is a schedule of the press conference subject matter:

- Friday, July 8 Topic: Women on the Convention Scene
Participation: Margaret Price as chairman of the Permanent Organization Committee; Vel Phillips as co-chairman of the Rules and Order of Business Committee; Dorothy Vredenburg as DNC Secretary; and possibly several members of the Platform Committee who have attended many Conventions and have anecdotes, etc.
- Saturday, July 9 Topic: How to Get into Politics
Participation: Early arriving delegates and members of the Platform Committee who can talk about the ways they got into politics and how others can start from scratch.
- Sunday, July 10 Topic: My Husband Could Be President
Participation: The wives of all the men who are to be nominated at the Convention—announced candidates, favorite sons, and anyone who has given permission for his name to be placed in nomination.
- Monday, July 11 Topic: I'm Running for Office
Participation: Top women candidates at Convention who are running for Senate, House, and statewide offices and perhaps some running for local office who are interesting.
- Tuesday, July 12 Topic: I Married a Politician
Participation: The wives of candidates for key Senatorial and Congressional seats. They talk about their attitude toward their husbands holding public office and about the rigors of campaigning.

Additional topics: The Woman Politician at Work; Why I am a Democrat

Gatov: as I came to know later when I got to know her better. She was very hard working, and I think was perfect for the era she held that job in. She referred very frequently to her husband Walter, to whom she was devoted, and she understood the need of a woman to balance her time allotment to her home, her family, and her volunteer work.

She was very sympathetic. People could identify with her, perhaps envy her, too, because she obviously was quite a wealthy woman. She knew enough not to press them beyond what they could do, or to ask them to do more than they could be reasonably expected to do. In that way, she and Paul Butler balanced each other very well. I thought Katie was a tremendous force in the four years that she had it that I was working in it. That was from '56 to '60, but she was in there longer than that.

She was vice-chairman of the national committee, I think, almost from the time I became really much involved, around '52 to '53. I don't know, really, when she went in. I thought she was an excellent person. She was articulate, she handled the press well, she was good on her feet, but she wasn't overpowering. She projected a lovely image, of "If this was a political woman, I wouldn't mind my wife being involved in politics."

There was nothing hard or profane or vulgar or offensive. She was a very tough-minded person, but you only found that out after you'd got to know her better. [Laughs] It didn't all come out at once.

Chall: Did she have a goal, do you think, for the women's division that you could sense?

Gatov: Yes. Well, she set goals, as a matter of fact, and set things for women to do. Some of them seemed sort of silly, to me, but I guess probably some of them worked. There were caravans of women to trail a candidate, for instance, and emphasize the need to elect this person because of the increase in the price of groceries. Say, you have baskets of groceries with price tags on them. "This was the way it was five years ago, and this is the way it is now because of the incumbent." [Laughs] Things like this, which were a little elementary.

But she also had a flair for the dramatic, and she would dream up airplane convocations. For instance, I remember one in the Stevenson campaign, when she had half-a-dozen governors out here, each having gone to several communities that seemed suitable, ethnically or something at the time. Then they all got in their planes with their particular friends, and we all converged on Long Beach Airport, and had a smashing rally down there, which made LIFE magazine, two pages of it.

Gatov: She was good at this kind of thing--the visuals, as they call them now. I don't know what they called them then. But she was creative about things like that. She had a fine sense of the dramatic. She is a writer, too. She was very hurt by Kennedy's dropping of her. I think that they didn't handle it well at all.

Chall: Why did they drop her?

Gatov: It's just customary.

Chall: You were telling me that--

Gatov: You know, Robert Strauss has said that he's going to resign. He's finally picked up the notion that whoever's elected is going to pick his own person. This is just routine. I think she just forgot about it. It had been so long since we'd had a Democrat in the White House.

Chall: What did she do after that?

Gatov: Kennedy appointed her to the highest rank that a woman had ever held in the State Department. I don't remember exactly what it was, but she was assistant secretary in charge of something or other.

Chall: You could probably find it in Who's Who.

Gatov: I'm sure you can. She was on the proper floor, the seventh floor or the eighth floor, whichever one it is with the proper colored walls. She had the right status. She had a lovely home in Washington. Walter, who's now dead, was a wonderful host. She did a great deal of entertaining. I think she liked the job, but she never liked the Kennedys.

Chall: She didn't like them before they were elected to office, or after?

Gatov: I don't know how she felt about them before. I don't remember. I'm sure I saw her during those times.

Chall: I just wondered if that had anything to do with her removal?

Gatov: It might have.

Chall: Tell me about Margaret Price.

Gatov: Margaret Price was the vice-chairman of the party in Michigan, and a younger, more aggressive, more organized kind of person than Katie had been. I don't think she related as comfortably to the middle-aged

Gatov: volunteer types. She was sort of a precursor to what we're getting now--well-educated. Katie wasn't, particularly, but in Margaret's case it was very plain that she was. She had high standards, and expected high performance from people.

In that case, I don't know whether she was as effective or not. By then, I had moved to Washington so I saw her there a lot. She was quite uptight about the fact that there weren't more women in the Kennedy administration. She was getting complaints she said.

She recruited a group of us to be sort of a search committee. We searched and searched, and we had a very difficult time finding people that he could consider appointing.

Chall: The women's movement was just then--?

Gatov: It was just stirring, and Kennedy hadn't appointed enough women. As I said, I'm sure that's why I'm going into their library, because they just didn't have many.* Now it's a conspicuous lack. [Laughs]

Chall: I don't think I've ever asked you what your position is on the Equal Rights Amendment.

Gatov: I'm very much for ERA, and I'm distressed it isn't doing better. But after some of the stories I've read about their rather threatening, intimidating lobbying methods, I'm not too surprised. A lot of men are repulsed by angry, militant women, and it is men who must be convinced.

Candidates' Wives

[insert from Tape 8, side 1]

Chall: Candidates' wives are given a different responsibility today than they were a decade or two ago.

Gatov: The role of the candidate's wife really is something that somebody [laughs] ought to take up some day, and do volumes on. [Laughs]

Chall: Maybe you could give it a try! An outline, right now. [Laughs]

*Mrs. Gatov agreed to deposit all of her papers in the Kennedy Library, not solely those relating to the 1960 campaign and her term as Treasurer.

Gatov: One has remained, in my recollection, as one of the two or three samples of the kind who make serious problems for their husbands and for everybody in the campaign.

Chall: And how does this come about?

Gatov: Well, they tend to try to mastermind the campaign. They are not patient enough or serious enough about it on a full-time basis to actually come into the office and work, which many political wives do. This woman tended to come in, ask a few rather snappish questions, and if she didn't like the answer--or even if she did--it tended to be brief and superficial.

Pretty soon, she would be complaining to Don Bradley that we were doing this or that the wrong way. But she didn't know enough about it to really give him all the information, so it would take a great deal of other peoples' time to explain to him what she was talking about in the first place, and what our version of it was. She felt that we didn't treat her husband with adequate respect. She had a strong sense of the dignity of the office that he was seeking.

She, I don't think, was used to the extreme informality that goes on among the people involved in a campaign, at least in my experience. There was no discrimination between staff and volunteers. There was no "Mr." and "Mrs." It was sort of "Hey, you!" and if you don't happen to be doing anything at the moment, somebody will think of something for you to do. It may not be what you had in mind.

This kind of interplay of personalities quite upset her. There were a few men who could handle her. They were just about assigned to do that. Jack Abbott was one who could cope with her, because he could divert her and make her laugh, and kid her, and she would take it from him, because she'd known him quite a while, and he did it in such a way that it was acceptable to her.

She took strong personal dislikes to a number of people. Well, she took offense that things weren't being done properly, and that we were really not interested in her husband's future and the success of his campaign. We weren't working hard enough. It was a negative kind of participation, and frankly, we did everything we could to keep her out of the office as much as possible.

Of course, after he got to Washington, she did go into the office a great deal, and according to what I heard from staff members, was very disruptive. He wasn't strong enough to cope with her. She was his second wife, and she had been working in either his office or somebody else's. A diminutive person with a great deal of social aspiration, and looking forward very much during the campaign to being the wife of an important officeholder.

Gatov: When they got to Washington, they restored--in the days before there was much of that--a delightful old house (I forget just what period you'd call it) quite near the Capitol. She furnished it in a most elegant way, and set about doing a great deal of entertaining.

Chall: Could they afford that?

Gatov: I have no idea. Of course, in those days, campaign and political financing were much less restrictive than they are today, and there were many people who probably made funds available for entertaining and so forth.

I know there was money raised to pay for trips home. Travel allowance has been improved enormously now, depending on where you live. But in those days, you just had, I think, \$2,300 for travel. It didn't matter if you lived in Philadelphia or San Diego. It made a big difference! [Laughs] So, I suspect--I have no way of knowing--but there was nothing wrong with it, in any case, in those days.

Chall: Who were the other couple of wives that you could think of, who were damaging to a campaign?

Gatov: There was one we nicknamed Itsey-bitsy. There certainly was a certain irreverence in campaigns! [Laughs] She was an absolutely impossible human being. Most attractive-looking woman. She would drink nothing but champagne. This was in the days before people habitually kept champagne in the refrigerator, if they do now. They'd be invited someplace for cocktails, for fund raising, and she'd be asked what she wanted to drink, and she would never just say Ginger ale, or something. She'd give you a little speech about how she didn't drink gin, or vodka, or scotch, or bourbon, and she only drank champagne. Then the hostess was in a tizzy! [Laughs]

Chall: What did she do?

Gatov: After a while, we remembered to alert people, or we brought the champagne or something.

She complained about the amount of travel involved, and the time that her husband was away. She just made his life miserable, and that of anybody else that she came in contact with in the campaign--and complaining all the time, of course, about being excluded from events, and not being invited, which became deliberate. In the pressures of campaigning, there's only so much irritation that's avoidable that you can accept, so we would forget to tell her. We'd forget to mail her a campaign schedule, this kind of thing.

Gatov: Another one who was extremely difficult demanded an extraordinary amount of attention, and had a temperament that made you wonder just how much use you wanted to make of her. She was an extremely attractive, very intelligent young woman. Apparently, in their earlier married life when her husband was in Congress, it had been a tidier, more confined environment, and she was happy doing a lot of personalized campaigning, door-to-door kinds of things. It was sort of a family affair and the young children were involved. But in a later, more difficult campaign she kind of came apart. She would be late to things. She wanted to be involved in something, and then she'd show up forty minutes late--this kind of thing. There was no discipline in her, so all of her responsibility went on to somebody else. This was the kind of thing I mean.

Chall: What about Jackie Kennedy? Jackie--who didn't particularly care for the whole process, wasn't that much of a problem?

Gatov: No.

Chall: She was a problem in a different way?

Gatov: A very different way. Well, it was essentially no problem, because first of all, her participation was severely limited.

Chall: She was pregnant?

Gatov: She was pregnant, or recovering from a miscarriage or something during a great deal of the time that he was campaigning. It was made plain to us very early that she had certain qualms. Before dinner the candidate would be in a large room where the guests were gathering. We always had her in another little room where three or four attractive, urbane men were to be.

She drank very little, as I recall, and so probably by that time, we were sophisticated enough to have some champagne for her. She just simply wanted to be entertained. She would go through certain motions. She would not make speeches, she would not give interviews, so that this was not a problem. I mean, when you know ahead of time what you're expected to do. She may have complained about some of the accommodations. I don't know. I never heard about it, if she did.

Chall: At one time it seemed that a public official couldn't possibly be a divorced man. That was a mark against him, so that if a future was important to him, he generally managed to stay married, even if it was just legally. Now, it seems to be all right for a wife to say, "I don't like this kind of life," and the voters accept the fact that it isn't necessary for a candidate or a public official to be married.

Chall: There were a couple of articles about Mieke Tunney a few months ago in the San Francisco Chronicle, and she did complain about being a wife of a public official in a way that made it seem that she had some right on her side.

Gatov: I'm sure that's true. I think everything you said was true. On the other hand, I'm sorry that she felt it was necessary to air her complaints. If John had done that, he would have been severely criticized--and properly so, I think. He didn't. The reason I know a little bit about this is that I'm sufficiently older than he is, that I was almost in a mother and son relationship. He could talk to me about certain things that he didn't, frankly, talk to some other people about.

During the period before they were finally divorced, Mieke decided that Washington was dull and she'd like to live in Europe. She would take off for Europe for months at a time. John would get reports back about the people that she was going out with, and so forth, but he never said anything. As far as I know, he didn't make an issue of it.

I remember once when he called to say that she wanted a divorce. I think I mentioned someplace that he is Catholic. He's a convert to the Catholic Church.

Chall: No, I didn't know that.

Gatov: Well, he is. He'd been a roommate of Ted Kennedy's, and was converted by Rose, so [laughs] that would make you an awfully good Catholic, by the time you got through with that process!

He was anguished about it, and he said, "The terrible part is that there is nothing I can do about it. She's going to come back from Europe,"--this was a couple of years after the election--"she's going to come back from Europe in September, and she will make her decision. It's out of my hands. There's nothing I can do." He said, "I can't live in Europe, unless I give all this up. At times, I'm tempted to give it all up, but an awful lot of people have put an awful lot into getting me where I am. I don't think I've got the right to just resign."

I must say, I've felt a little bit that way about it. When a person runs, and is elected, they are carrying a lot of public trust with them. There's nothing to compel them to run again, but to just resign would create a chaotic condition, which only he would understand, and perhaps some of the people who supported him. But John was looking forward to a very bleak life, because as you know, Catholics don't mind divorce, but it's the remarriage that gets to them.

Chall: But by the same token, it doesn't hurt his campaign, that he's a divorced man, in the same sense that it might have hurt Adlai Stevenson's, or did hurt Rockefeller's when he changed partners.

Gatov: Rockefeller remarried, and that is the difference.

Chall: He remarried his friend from campaign days.

Gatov: Yes, he remarried his friend, and then she had the bad taste to have a baby just before the California primary, which really reminded people that he had divorced his then-middle-aged first wife for a younger, attractive woman.

So, polls have been taken recently on John Tunney's behalf, that indicated that his divorce was of minimal interest. Five percent or something like that, at worst. They weren't even concerned about it. So I think there has been an improvement in that. But I think if he has any plans, he's not going to carry them out until after the election.

These are three examples of difficult wives. There're lots more, but those three give you an illustration of the negative side for a candidate or a campaign.

Chall: Sometimes it sounds as if a problem is exacerbated by the campaign; there might have or might not have been a difficult marital problem previously.

Gatov: I think there's no question about it, and it does take a certain kind of woman to be able to accept the prolonged absence, the constant interference with what she would like to be doing. It eliminates a social life altogether. The only time she sees him is at a function, along with hopefully hundreds of other people. You just have to expect to erase a year from your life together. Have you been watching "The Adams Chronicles," by any chance?

Chall: Yes.

Gatov: Well, Abigail Adams, I think showed very clearly the sacrifices that are not too dissimilar today from what the political wife has to put up with. It really does terrific violence to their personal life, but if they both agree that it's worth it--

Chall: They'd have to.

Gatov: --some higher purpose to achieve, then sacrifice isn't too bad. I've known many happy political marriages. The Humphreys, for example. Muriel and Hubert are a pair that are so solid. They, I believe, had

Gatov: four children. The Fords are another example. There used to be a Senator Bartlett from Alaska, who was a wonderful man, as was his wife. She was marching in anti-war parades when Alaska wasn't particularly fond of that kind of thing. It didn't create any problem.

Phil Hart and his wife--certainly she's an individualist. That marriage seems to have survived. It's only his health that's making him retire now.

So it apparently can provide a common interest, or it can be a wedge.

[end insert from Tape 8, side 1]

Chall: Well, I think that just about does it.

Gatov: [Laughs] I think we've covered just about everything we could possibly cover.

[end Tape 13, side 2; end of interview]

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